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Saturday September 21 1996

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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 46,664

With Simon Hoggart, Joanna Coles, Jeremy Hardy

Michael Billington on Pinter's new play

the week

Mark Lawson: why I chose sex over celibacy



Poet of Darkness



Cardinal describes nightmare Catholics dreaded for years

Betrayed by the bishop

Madeline Bunting
Religious Affairs Editor

THE leaders of Britain's four million Catholics said last night that they felt betrayed and duped by the Bishop of Argyll who three years ago lied and gave "cast-iron" guarantees that rumours about sexual misdemeanours were unfounded.

The Catholic authorities in Scotland urged the runaway Right Reverend Roderick Wright, the Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, to come out of hiding to answer questions about his relationships with at least two women and his 15-year-old son. One churchman called him "the second Lord Lucan".

Cardinal Thomas Winning, head of Scotland's 750,000 Catholics, described the last 10 days as a nightmare he had been dreading for years. "I weep for the mother and child and the way in which they have been treated, but I have been so duped by the events of the last few days that I don't know what to believe any more. I feel as if I have been betrayed in all of this, and I know what the people are feeling because I am feeling the same."

He said that three years ago his concern over an allegation involving a "particular person" and unrelated to any child had been set at rest by Bishop Wright's denials. "We received cast-iron guarantees that reports were scurrilous and there was no truth in them whatsoever. You live in fear of a nightmare, perhaps, but that seemed to recede because we had these guarantees. But, unfortunately, the nightmare is on us now."

The Scottish Catholic Church has had to cope with a succession of damaging revelations since the bishop disappeared 10 days ago and his name was linked to a divorcee nurse, Kathleen Macphie. His resignation was announced on Monday, before another woman, Joanna Whibley, came forward to reveal that her 15-year-old son Kevin had been fathered by the bishop when he was a curate.

Ms Whibley said yesterday that the Church could do more to help women in her position: "What I think would be far more sensible was if the Catholic Church, as it has already acknowledged the difficulties, would be pro-active and set up its own telephone line for women who have children by priests to telephone them and tell them their details. And, I am sure, the Church will want to take care and take responsibility for these women."

Questions as to how Bishop Wright was able to send substantial sums of money — in July he sent a cheque of £2,031 — to Ms Whibley have not been answered. Cardinal Winning said that Bishop Wright had assured him last Sunday that not a penny of diocesan money had been paid towards the child's upkeep.

"He was very honest about finances of the diocese and he left prominent financial statements. I had no reason to doubt his word."

One source has suggested that July's cheque was the proceeds of an insurance policy the bishop and Ms Whibley had taken out.

But Catholic leaders are bracing themselves for the possibility of more scandal. Archbishop Keith O'Brien, the recently appointed apostolic administrator for Bishop Wright's diocese, said there was no knowing if there was more to be revealed.



The Pope, who accepted the Bishop of Argyll's resignation on Thursday, spoke of family values in Sainte Anne d'Autray, France, yesterday.

PHOTOGRAPH: PHILIPPE WOLAZIER

"In all honesty, when one opens a can of worms, one just doesn't realise what's at the bottom of it," he said.

Leaders of the Scottish Catholic Church have not been able to contact the bishop since a meeting in Glasgow with Cardinal Winning last Sunday evening when his resignation was accepted. The Vatican accepted it formally on Thursday.

Ms Whibley who spent the day in her modest council house in Polegate, Sussex, besieged by the media, submitted evidence to the second Lord Lucan. "We simply do not know where he is or what his intentions are or why he has been leading a double life."

As Catholics demanded to know how a man with a nine-year-old son could accept the position of a bishop, it emerged that Bishop Wright had had doubts about whether to accept the post.

The night before his consecration, he told 15 priests that he had rung the Papal Nuncio in London three times to turn down the job only to hang up before it was answered.

Prayers were said for Bishop Wright at mid-morning mass at St Columba's Cathedral, Oban, as church lead-

ers said they were puzzled at how the bishop's secret had survived the "very, very strict" scrutiny process undertaken by the Papal Nuncio before his appointment as a bishop. Bishop Wright is now said to be full of remorse that he undertook the office.

Despicable men, page 3; Letters, page 5; Mark Lawson, The Week

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Greens brave disaster at polls

Stuart Millar

THE Green Party yesterday decided overwhelmingly to contest the general election despite warnings from members that it is likely to be annihilated at the polls.

An emergency motion at the Greens' autumn conference in Hastings, East Sussex, sought to disengage the national party from the election and instead focus on European elections, where it has had better success in the past.

The motion said the party should "actively abstain" because the electoral system was "unfair and prejudiced" against smaller parties and gave no scope for the "cost-effective promotion of green politics".

Local parties, which are independent of the national structure, would have been encouraged not to contest seats.

Activists who put forward the motion said there was a perception among voters, even Green supporters, that Green candidates would never win. They pointed to the success of sister parties in European countries that have proportional representation.

Chris Bushy, of Aberystwyth, said: "This whole argument is about resources. We can spend it all at general elections, and charge in like the Light Brigade and get blasted."

He said the party had "donated" around £300,000 to the Government in lost deposits.

Despite winning 15 per cent of the national vote at the 1989 European elections, the party won no seats and performed disastrously at the 1992 election. Since then membership has fallen from 20,000 to 8,000 this year, although it has risen sharply recently.

Delegates ignored his plea to target resources elsewhere, defeating both the motion and a call for minimal involvement in the election.

Iris Murdoch fears writer's block means she will never write another novel

Joanna Coles

DADE Iris Murdoch, one of the best and most prolific writers of her generation, is suffering severely from writer's block and fears she may never write again.

The 77-year-old author, who won the Booker Prize in 1978 for *The Sea, The Sea*, said yesterday that she was in a "very, very bad, quiet place". Her husband, John Bayley, who recently retired as Warton Professor of English at Oxford University, said tests for Alzheimer's disease and other illnesses of with old age had proved negative.

Dame Iris, who was awarded the DBE for services to literature in 1987, said she normally wrote novels relatively quickly. Her last one, *Jackson's Dilemma* and her 28th to date, has just been published in paperback by Penguin, but there is nothing in the pipeline.

Asked whether she had suffered from writer's block before, she replied: "I think this is a very bad one."

She felt gloomy a lot of the time. "At the moment I can't



Iris Murdoch with her husband John Bayley

find anything to help me," she said. "I find I haven't got anything at the moment, and this is really rather startling to me."

"I feel as though maybe the whole thing has packed up. But I hope, I really do believe actually, I could get on and find myself in a happier state, but I don't think so at the very moment. I'm just wandering. I think of things and

then they go away forever."

Writer's block remains the most frightening of authors' predicaments. While Kingsley Amis advised a "wash and a shave", Mark Twain counselled: "When the tank runs dry you've only to leave it alone and it will fill up again in time."

Duet in perfect harmony, The Week, page 15

Yeltsin may not be able to stand major heart surgery

David Hearst in Moscow

THE head of the Kremlin medical team, Sergei Moronov, expressed foreboding for the first time in public yesterday about the condition of Russian president Boris Yeltsin, to withstand major heart surgery.

The condition of Mr Yeltsin's kidneys, liver and other vital organs substantially increased the risks of his forthcoming heart bypass operation, it was admitted. Dr Moronov said that, as a result, the operation had become "a big and very serious one".

A heart transplant was even a possibility.

His comments reflect the nervousness of Russia's leading heart surgeons, who will have to bear responsibility for an operation in which the condition of the patient has increased the chance of complications.

Having downplayed for months the seriousness of Mr Yeltsin's heart condition —

passing it off as "a cold" or "colossal weariness" — the Kremlin yesterday dropped the posture that the 65-year-old president was still actively running the country.

It was announced that Mr Yeltsin would stay in the Central Clinic and until next week, the third time his stay has been extended.

Dr Moronov told a televised press conference: "All of us during our lives acquire quite a lot of different problems with our organs and unfortunately Boris Nikolayevich [Yeltsin] has them too."

"One cannot just consider the operation as on one organ alone, of course it will touch upon many other organs and systems and we must be absolutely sure of preserving their functions."

A Russian surgeon who regularly performed heart bypass operations at one of the four leading Moscow hospitals told the Guardian that the medical team would almost certainly now be preparing for at least the possibility of performing a

full heart transplant on the president.

As for a bypass, in which the function of the heart has to be temporarily stopped, the surgeon said there were two main risks: the possibility that doctors could not get the heart beating again and the problems caused by the life support machine to the functions of the kidneys, liver and lungs and to the blood supply to the brain.

He said: "When the aim of the operation is the aspiration to preserve 100 per cent of a man and, in this case, the president of the country, the surgeon's team must be prepared for any development — including transplantation of the heart. It's obvious you stop the heart, and what if you can't get it going again?"

The number of by-pass operations performed in Russia each year is a fraction of that in Western countries and Russian surgeons have even less experience with transplants. Mr Yeltsin has made a patriotic gesture by deciding to have the operation in Russia.

Inside

Britain
Labour plans to replace post-16 benefit with a means tested education allowance roused fierce condemnation from all sides.

World News
Bulgaria's UN ambassador should resign after he voiced criticism of his government, the foreign ministry said in Sofia.

Finance
Top City firms are braced for criticism of their role in the controversial sale of £250 million of shares in Robert Maxwell's company.

Sport
The return of Tour de France hero Miguel Indurain turned sour on yesterday's 13th stage when he gave up in mid-race.

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EU tells Britain beef ban stays

Stephen Bates in Brussels and Ian Traynor in Bonn

THE European Commission responded to the Government's decision to halt the cull of 147,000 cows by warning yesterday that the ban on the export of British beef could stay in place until BSE had been eradicated in Britain.

European leaders made it clear they believed the Government had reneged on last June's Florence agreement when the Cabinet decided on Thursday not to proceed with the cull of cattle under 30 months of age believed to be at risk of BSE.

The Government says a statistical study by Oxford University which says the disease will die out within five years renders the selective cull unnecessary. The EU argues the cull was part of the agreement to secure a ban on lifting of the ban, and that it will ensure both that eradication occurs more quickly and that consumer confidence on the Continent is restored.

John Major yesterday called the European Union ministers to take part in a rational debate. The Prime Minister insisted that in halting the cull Britain remained within the rules agreed with EU farm ministers.

"We are operating within the Florence agreement," he said. "It was perfectly clear within the agreement that if new evidence arose we had to consider that evidence."

Franz Fischler, the agriculture commissioner, told the European Parliament in Strasbourg: "As long as they do not meet the preconditions and until we can have a work-

ing document from them which we can carefully check, then an end to the export ban is simply not a possibility."

In Brussels, Klaus Van der Paal, the commission's senior spokesman, said: "If the UK government comes to the conclusion that the conditions [for lifting the ban] cannot be fulfilled then the beef ban cannot be lifted."

The commission insisted that it was abiding by the Florence agreement — hailed by Mr Major at the time as a triumph — but that any new evidence would be considered. Any lifting of the ban will have to be agreed by the veterinary committee, by the commission and finally by the Council of Ministers.

But the commission opened the possibility of a partial lifting, with or without a cull, in Northern Ireland if its cattle are given a clean bill of health — a move the Government has opposed because of its implications for the unity of the United Kingdom.

In Britain Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Secretary, admitted that the Cabinet's decision meant there was no chance of the ban being lifted this autumn.

There were signs of a hardening of attitudes by fellow member states, which feel they have been over-ruled by Mr Major's deal which the Government has now spurned.

In Germany, as consumer groups issued warnings against imported cheese or milk, Klaus Kinkel, the foreign minister, said: "A unilateral change by the British Government is not acceptable. The main priority is the health of the consumer and the ban will remain in force."

Labour plans to replace post-16 child benefit with education allowance

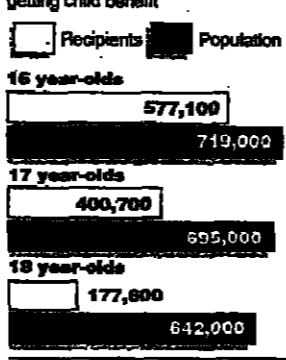
Michael White Political Editor

CHILD poverty groups last night joined fierce Tory and Liberal Democrat condemnation of Labour's £1 billion plan to replace child benefit for older teenagers with a means-tested education allowance, targeted at low and middle income families whose children currently drop out of school.

But after bridge-building overtures to trade unions and Labour backbenchers, the shadow chancellor, Gordon Brown, was able to unveil his package to reform the "unfair lottery of unequal provision" without a hail of abuse from leftwing MPs and activists.

That may come at next month's party conference or when Mr Brown, the shadow

education secretary, David Blunkett, and Harriet Harman announce crucial details of the scheme absent yesterday to the delight of Tory election planners who dubbed it "a new teenage tax".



Mr Brown will unveil the plan which the allowance will be paid to higher than child benefit and possibly between £12 and £15 range — after the November budget. Only then will he also reveal the income level at which better-off parents of youngsters aged from 16-18 will cease to be eligible. It remains a potent minefield.

"No parent will know where they stand. They are replacing a system of certainty with one of uncertainty," said one Tory strategist as child poverty analysts, including Professor Ruth Lester who sat on Labour's Social Justice Commission, warned that deserving families could be hit.

In an ambitious blueprint for raising skills via work-based education, a system of route, Labour plans to use the £600 million spent on post-16

child benefit, plus £400 million spent in Youth Training (YT) allowances to re-focus resources towards the less well-off. Mr Brown has cautiously insisted it must not increase public spending.

The money, still paid to mothers, will only go to those whose children are in "meaningful education or training". The move represents a significant shift of resources from welfare to education, Mr Harman said — part of Labour's drive to cut welfare costs by getting people back to work.

Mr Brown and his allies reached agreement this week after backstairs battles which saw Chris Smith replaced by Ms Harman at the social security portfolio in July.

Yesterday the trio stressed the need to shake up the post-16 education system, the grounds of fairness and economic efficiency. "The status

quo is not working and must be changed," said Mr Brown.

Crucially, it is the charge repeatedly made against Thatcher tax reforms. Like the Lib Dem spokeswoman, Liz Lynne MP, Mr Lilley predicted the change would prove administratively difficult and counter-productive.

Gail Wither, director of the Child Poverty Action Group, expressed disappointment over the adoption of a means-tested route when extra resources were what the situation really needed.

Letters, page 8; Desirable residence, page 9

The Social Security Secretary, Peter Lilley, denounced the move as proof that Labour remained the tax and spend party determined to raid the pockets of 7 million parents who bring up 15 million children and need the tax-and-benefit system to recognise the cost of families.

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Letters, page 8; Desirable residence, page 9

'Oldest art' alters origins of man

Christopher Zahn in Sydney and Tim Radford

AUSTRALIAN scientists last night upset theories of human origins with the discovery of rock art which they said was at least twice as old as that in the caves of Lascaux, France.

They have identified a group of four sculpted boulders dating back 70,000 years in the remote Kimberley region of Western Australia. They also claim to have found human artefacts in sediments known to have been laid down between 116,000 and 176,000 years ago.

If confirmed, the discovery — to be published in the British scientific journal *Antiquity* in December — could send anthropologists back to the drawing board.

One of the scientists, Paul Tacon of the Australian Museum, told the Sydney Morning Herald: "It changes enormously the way we think about Australian pre-history. To suggest that Aborigines have been in Australia for over 100,000 years really does change a lot of things."

The site is 50 miles north east of the township of Kunming at a place known to Aborigines as Jinnium. Photographs show isolated

boulders, the size of a large lorry, covered with hundreds of small engraved circles and lines.

Dr Tacon said the designs must have been made by humans and despite their primitive form were art. On one small surface alone more than 3,200 engravings were counted.

A stone tool was found in the site possibly being 30,000 to 176,000 years old. The scientists say it may be the oldest dated rock-art site on Earth.

Rock dating is always tricky: the scientists themselves say their results should be "the beginning, and not the end, of public scrutiny and discussion". But the find presents a problem for the orthodoxy which has it that human-

kind began in Africa. *Homo erectus* picked up a stone axe and set out to colonise the world 800,000 years ago. *Homo sapiens* — modern man — is a latecomer who emerged about 200,000 years ago in Africa, and began migrating 150,000 years ago, populating the entire world.

The Australian Aborigines have been known to have settled in Australia about 50,000 to 60,000 years ago, and genetic evidence links them firmly with other modern humans.

Yoga group seeks student high flyers for new seat of learning

Donald MacLeod Education Correspondent

ACADEMIC high-flyers can now contemplate studying beneath a different set of dreaming spires — Mentmore Towers, home of a new Maharishi seat of learning.

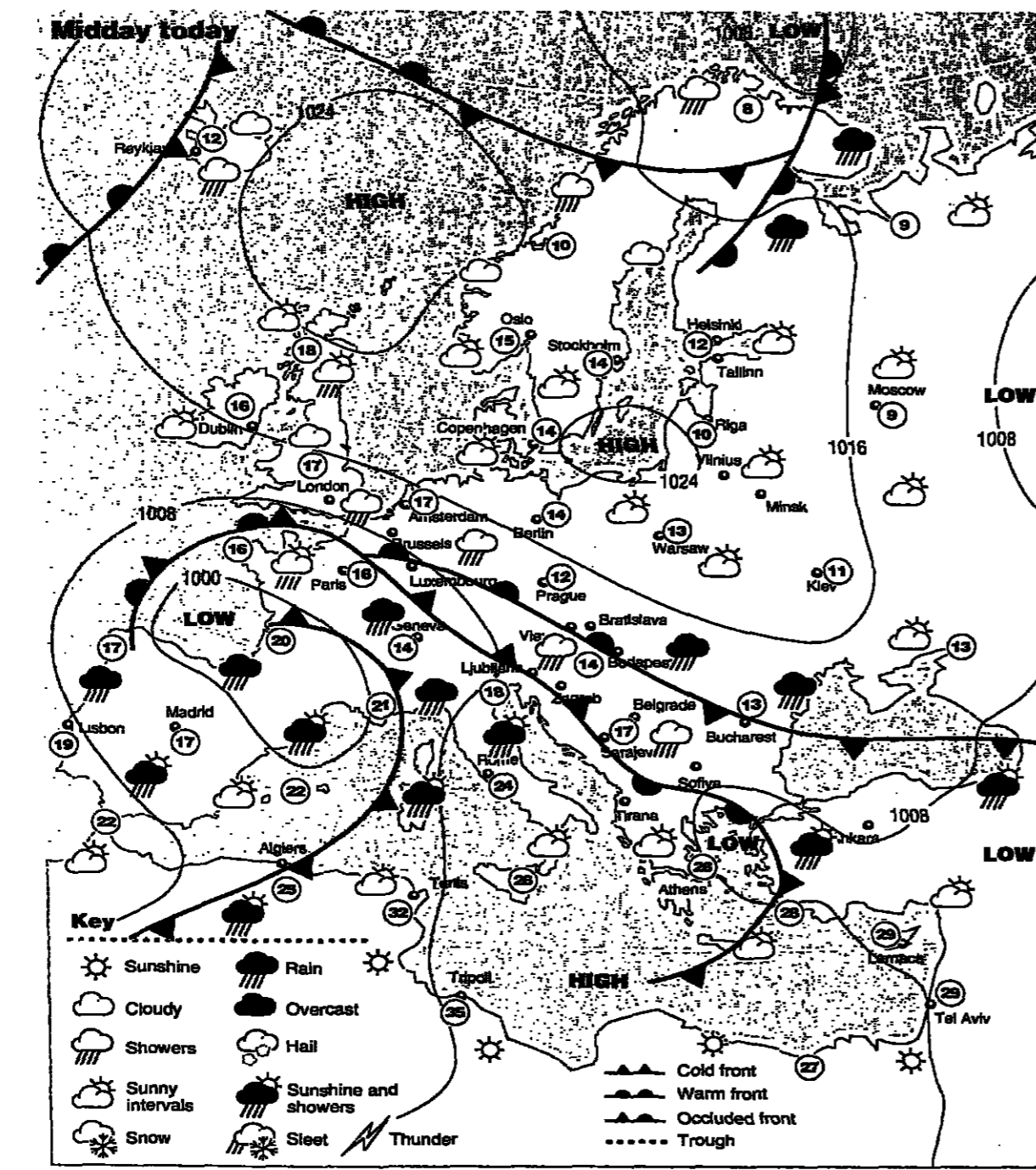
Better known as the base for the yogic flyers of the Natural Law Party, Mentmore in Buckinghamshire is offering degrees in management, economics, accounting and finance under an arrangement with the University of London.

Management and Technology. hopes the external degrees will be the first step towards becoming a fully fledged university in five years' time.

London University, which has thousands of external students around the world, sets and marks its exams but does not guarantee the course.

"We are anything about their methods of study. It is up to students how they prepare for our exams," a spokeswoman said.

The weather in Europe



Forecast for the cities table with columns for city, temperature, and weather conditions.

Around the world table with columns for location, temperature, and weather conditions.

European weather outlook. A weak frontal system will bring a few showers to northern parts of Norway and Sweden, but the rest of Scandinavia will continue to be dominated by high pressure. That means plenty of fine weather with early mist and fog clearing to give some good sunny spells. Max temp ranging from 8C in the far north to 17C in the south.

Television and radio — Saturday

BBC 1: 8:00am Bay City, 8:30am News, 9:00am Breakfast, 10:00am News, 10:30am The Goodies, 11:00am News, 11:30am The Big Breakfast, 12:00pm News, 1:00pm The Big Breakfast, 1:30pm News, 2:00pm The Big Breakfast, 2:30pm News, 3:00pm The Big Breakfast, 3:30pm News, 4:00pm The Big Breakfast, 4:30pm News, 5:00pm The Big Breakfast, 5:30pm News, 6:00pm The Big Breakfast, 6:30pm News, 7:00pm The Big Breakfast, 7:30pm News, 8:00pm The Big Breakfast, 8:30pm News, 9:00pm The Big Breakfast, 9:30pm News, 10:00pm The Big Breakfast, 10:30pm News, 11:00pm The Big Breakfast, 11:30pm News, 12:00am The Big Breakfast.

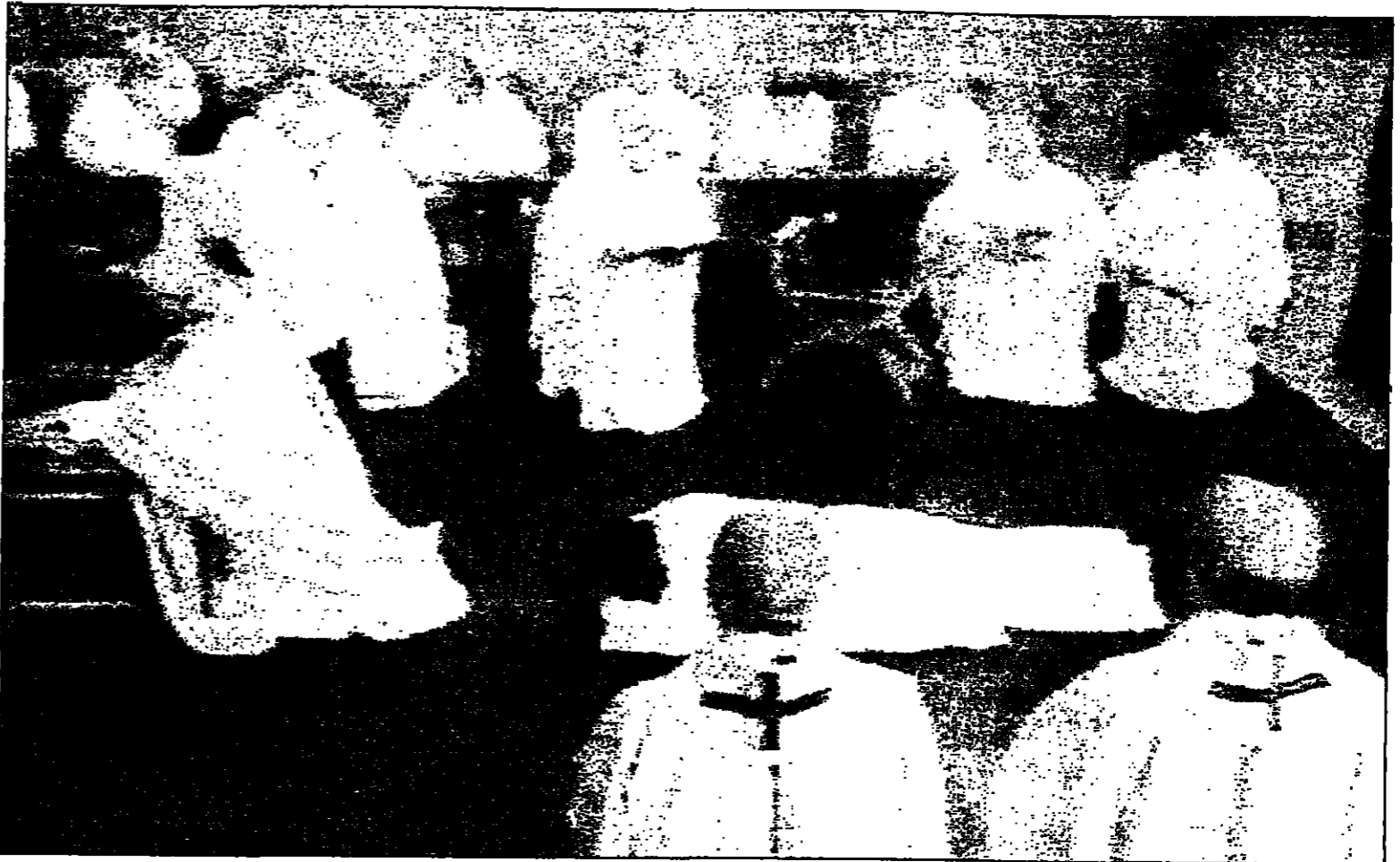
Television and radio — Sunday

BBC 1: 8:00am News, 8:30am News, 9:00am News, 9:30am News, 10:00am News, 10:30am News, 11:00am News, 11:30am News, 12:00pm News, 1:00pm News, 1:30pm News, 2:00pm News, 2:30pm News, 3:00pm News, 3:30pm News, 4:00pm News, 4:30pm News, 5:00pm News, 5:30pm News, 6:00pm News, 6:30pm News, 7:00pm News, 7:30pm News, 8:00pm News, 8:30pm News, 9:00pm News, 9:30pm News, 10:00pm News, 10:30pm News, 11:00pm News, 11:30pm News, 12:00am News.

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The Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, Roderick Wright, during his ordination at St Columba's Church, Oban, in January 1991, shortly after he became friends with Kathleen Macphee, the divorcee who disappeared with him two weeks ago

“These men behave quite despicably. The women usually get dumped”

What makes priests enter into relationships plagued by doubt? **Madeleine Bunting** meets women at the heart of the matter

CAROL has been in a relationship with a priest for 25 years. The Catholic Church knows nothing of it. Nor is it their business, retorts Carol roundly.

“I don't lie. I just don't tell anyone. But it's not second best. There are a lot of women in the same situation, we enjoy what we have when we have it,” says Carol [not her real name].

She has never talked publicly about her relationship but the coverage of the case of Bishop Wright incensed her and finally prompted her to break quarter of a century of silence.

“I know at least half a dozen women who have been in a similar situation. Some of the priests behave very irresponsibly, and they are then backed up by the Church, which puts all the blame on the ‘scarlet woman’.” I know one priest who was having affairs with four women at the same time. The Church covers up for these men. It's because of the kind of education they get in seminaries. There are no women around and they don't learn how to relate to women decently.”

Carol believes the issue is not about sex but about the men's dishonourable behaviour, and how the Church lets them off the hook.

“These are not scarlet women, they often go to priests for help when they are very vulnerable. These men are abusing them and failing to respect the individual. It's outrageous.”

“I know two or three men in my area who are in relationships. They are bloody good at covering it up. Yet they were the first to criticise a priest who left the priesthood because of a relationship with a friend of mine. It's all so hypocritical.”

“My case is completely different. We were both adults and it was only 15-20 years ago that we began our sexual relationship after a long friendship. He works abroad so we see each other sporadically. I don't want him to leave the priesthood. He's

good at his job and I'm never going to be a cap-in-hand sort of wife.

Besides I've seen other relationships with priests who've left the priesthood which later break up.”

The couple spend holidays together when he is in the country. His family know, and without saying anything, have implicitly accepted the relationship. Some of her friends know.

“He's a very traditional sort of Catholic and his feelings for me came as a complete surprise to him. We



“I didn't want to rock the boat — we couldn't see the point.”

“I would like to speak out because I recognise the rights of women in the Church and I think the all-male hierarchy is very anti-women. But I can't. I would destroy something very special with my friend, and it would put him in an impossible position.”

In the wake of the extraordinary revelations this week about Bishop Wright's resignation and 15-year-old son by Joanna Whibley, a string of women have come forward to describe their relationships with priests. Few are as happy as that of Carol.

“There's an enormous difference between those women in an adult, equal relationship and those in an abusive power relationship,” said Lara Winkley, of the Catholic Women's Network, who knows of at least 10 women in relationships with priests.

“These men behave quite despicably. They go over the line in comforting women and the women then get doubly hurt. The priest makes promises about leaving the priesthood, and the women live in hope year after year. They are usually dumped in the end.”

It's the connivance of the Church hierarchy in this kind of emotional abuse and irresponsibility towards the women and children which infuriates Seven Eleven, a support group for women having relationships with Catholic priests. When an affair is discovered by the hierarchy, the priest is often moved on to another parish,

forcibly separating the couple, and in the new parish he goes on to develop a new relationship.

“There are hundreds of women in relationships with priests,” says Anne Edwards [not her real name] who is herself in a “on-off relationship” with a priest, and who set up Seven Eleven in 1983.

“I have spoken to many women, and some have horrendous stories to tell. I only know of one woman who was well supported by her diocese when the relationship became known. In the vast majority of cases, the reaction has been negative and cruel — some women have been ridiculed when they went to their bishops for help.”

Many of the relationships of which Ms Edwards hears are “abusive”, where the priest is taking advantage of his role as a counsellor and of the vulnerability of the woman who is often seeking help because of a personal crisis.

“Many priests are completely ill-equipped to deal with women. They might be 40 or 50, but emotionally they're adolescents. I know of women who were touched or kissed by priests when they went to them for help. If doctors or social workers abused their position in this way, there would be recourse to some kind of body and tribunal, but there's no channel at all to make these kind of complaints in the Catholic Church.”

Despite Cardinal Basil Hume's insistence on Thursday that the Church had a responsibility towards the women and children involved in these illicit relationships, the arrangements for pastoral or financial support vary enormously.

A woman in Birmingham who had a child by a priest, claims he has given £15 a week out of his own income but the diocese has given nothing. Ms Edwards says that many priests are unable or unwilling to provide



money — a priest's salary can be as low as £2,500 and rarely exceeds £5,000.

In other cases, particularly with religious orders, considerable efforts are sometimes made. One nun involved with a priest was given free housing and an income to ensure that she did not reveal her relationship when her partner was sent abroad.

What is more straightforward is how the Church

deals with the priest involved in the affair. Canon Law is clear that a priest who refuses to give up the relationship must be suspended immediately. Many women feel that ultimately the Church is primarily motivated by the desire to hush up any potential scandal.

Typically, priests, if they are repentant, will be moved to another parish or even out of the country. But it is unlikely that anyone in their future parish will know of the previous scandal — the Church does not keep a register of men who have broken their celibacy vows.

More problematic to the Church are the priests who decide they want to give up the priesthood and fulfil their responsibilities to the woman and possible children.

One of the first things Pope John Paul II did on becoming Pontiff was to tighten up the procedures for those wanting to be laicised. Now you have virtually to prove you should never have been ordained in the first place: it can take as long as six years.

“The problem is that if clergy do want to leave, they find the door shut in their faces — they can't,” says Michael Walsh, a former priest and Catholic commentator. “It was much easier when I was a priest. Now laicisation is very slow and sometimes you can't get it at all. The effort has been to drive it all underground.”

What has changed markedly in recent years is the response of parishioners, who are often remarkably generous and non-judgmental of priests in relationships. In the wake of the horrific child abuse scandals, the response of many parishioners is: “Thank God, it's a woman”.

It was noticeable early this week how charitable many parishioners and even Church spokesmen were towards Bishop Wright. There was much sympathy for the plight of a man who had fallen in love; there was even muttering from Church sources that Cardinal Thomas Winning had been a little severe on him. All that has changed.

The conclusion is that it is not the breaking of the celibacy vow which angers Catholics, but the irresponsibility of a man who can father and then ignore a child for 15 years and the false promises which have clearly caused Joanna Whibley so much suffering.

The historic change which is being curiously assisted by the scandal of individual cases such as that of Bishop Wright is an enormous shift of power within the Catholic Church from the ordained priesthood to the laity.

For 1,500 years, priests have been a caste set apart from the laity, celibacy was the most obvious sign of their superiority. This status enabled the all-male hierarchy to build up power over the masses and exert influence in political and economic spheres.

“The notion of the caste has been eroded and priests are suffering from a loss of status. That is partly due to the lack of interest in religion of a secular society and they are no longer looked to as the arbiters of the community. It is partly because they are no longer likely to be better educated than people in their congregations,” says Mr Walsh.

John Challoner, of Catholics for a Changing Church, believes the consequences could be revolutionary. “All these issues of clerical misdemeanours will help destroy the credibility of the struc-

tures. The hierarchy is disintegrating like an old house and all the rats are running out. It is destroying itself as the scandals show up the need for change. From the 4th to the 20th century, the hierarchical nature of the Church has been an aberration, now we're going back to the beginning where the priest is no more than the chairperson chosen by the community of believers.”

The reforms of Vatican Council II in the early sixties posited a new vision of the Church. Instead of an institution directed by an all-male hierarchy of priests, the

Church was the people of God in which lay and ordained were equal, points out Fr Brendan Callaghan, principal of Heythrop Theological College.

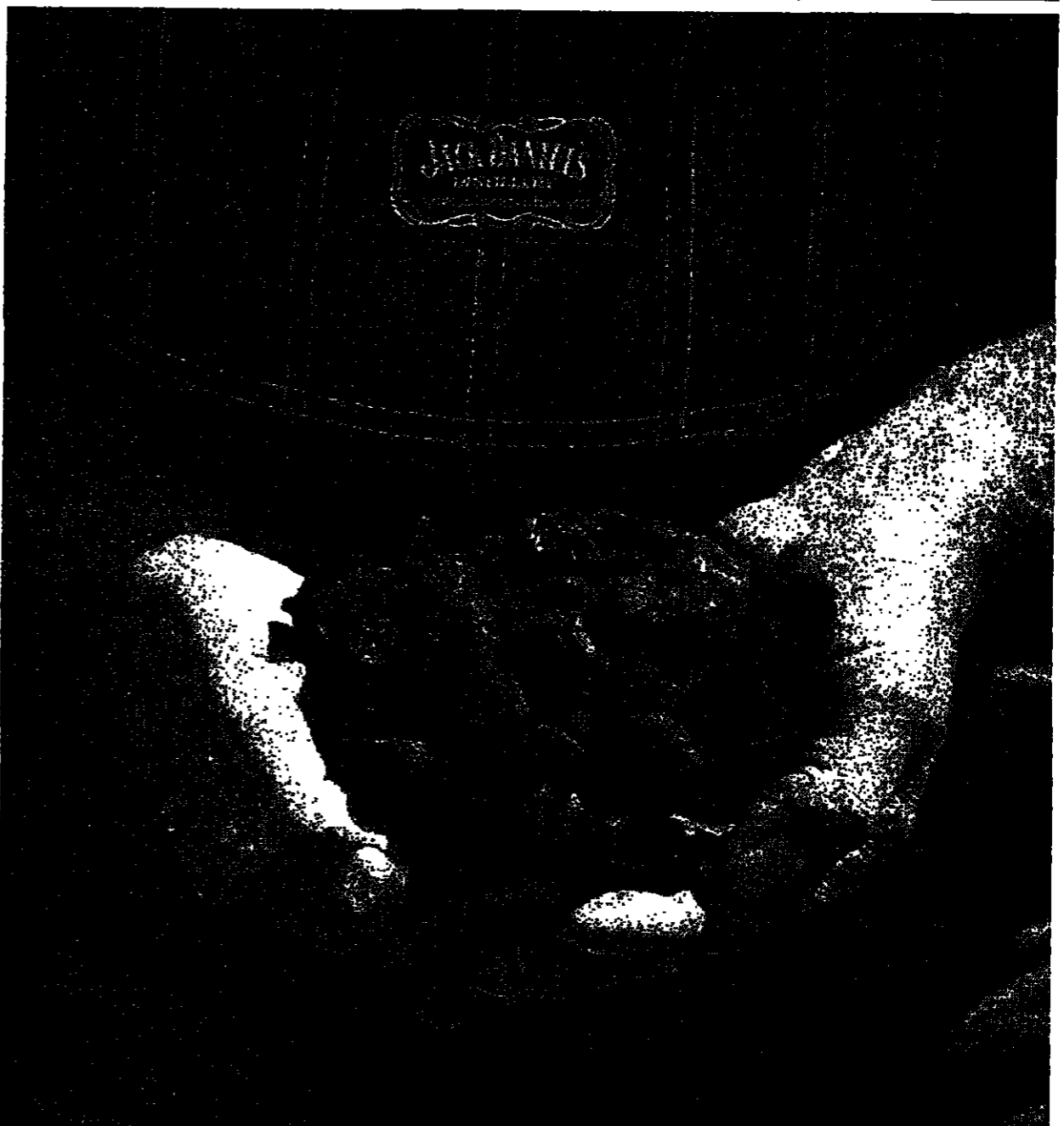
The traditional reverence for the priest as the fount of all authority is disappearing as lay people take on more autonomy, and see their priest as a fallible human being. There is a difficult transition period when the priest has to fulfill both sets of expectations, and it is clear some priests find their task confusing and difficult.

Fr Callaghan said: “People place priests on pedestals and

they get hugely upset when they fall off them as in the current scandal — people feel violated. But too much is expected of priests; people want them to be both human and superhuman. They must be affable, approachable but also with no evidence of human weakness. Most priests now feel overburdened by the enormous demands made on them.”

“The only good thing that this scandal can do is make people rethink their expectations of priests.”

Additional reporting by Joanna Moorhead.



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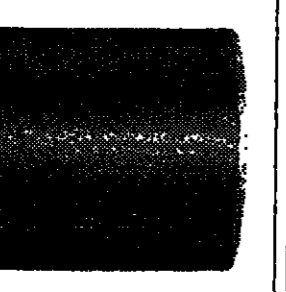
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To put it simply, he is exploring the apparent link between sexual and political fascism and the way one echoes, or sometimes even contradicts, the other.

Michael Billington on the latest Pinter

The Week page 19

Peter Hetherington reports on an equine celebration turned sour

Borders pageant puts town's prejudice on parade

AS AN historical pageant it is hard to beat: every year hundreds of horsemen gallop around the boundaries of the ancient burgh before parading through its centre to commemorate a 16th-century victory over marauding Englishmen.

But when Mandy Graham and Ashley Simpson joined the traditional celebration — after defeating legal moves to ban them from accompanying the men — all hell broke loose in Hawick.

Supporters and opponents of the women clashed angrily, amid cries of "scum", "tarts" and much worse from those backing male domination of the festivities, known as the Common Riding.

Three months on, cries of "no surrender" fill the air as old personal animosities emerge with a vengeance and traditionalists regroup to defend long-standing conventions.

The women, along with two other female riders — Gill Dickie and Denise Fairman — have responded by lodging a complaint of sexual discrimination with the Equal Opportunities Commission, on the grounds that the Common Riding Committee failed to compromise after an earlier court ruling.

Divisions are widening in the old textile town of 15,000, centre of the Scottish Borders woolen industry. Some community leaders, including a



Mandy Graham, whose participation in Hawick's traditional Common Riding celebration has thrown the town into turmoil PHOTOGRAPH: TED DITCHBURN

Church of Scotland clergyman and the local newspaper editor, have been warned to leave town or have received threatening letters. Councilors are ostracised, families have been divided, long-standing friendships broken and shops boycotted, as insults are traded in the street or over garden fences. The mood is ugly.

"I cannot believe the hatred and bigotry I have seen in the place where I've grown up," said councillor John Scott, a target of abuse. "It has made me feel sick."

What began as an apparently trivial argument over limited female participation provoked yet more belligerence this week at a noisy 600-strong meeting behind locked doors in the town hall of a new organisation, the Customs and Traditions Association, dedicated to preserving the status quo.

The anger was palpable as the Guardian attempted to gain admission, by paying a £1 membership fee, before being shown the door. "How did you find out about this?" snarled a woman later, jabbing an accusing finger.

On the steps of the town hall Henry Wear, whose nephew was at the head of this year's celebrations as the Cornet — the principal rider elected by a 30-strong committee — could not hide his disgust. "You're even frightened to talk to your neighbour," he complained. "All this because of two women hell-bent on de-

stroying something which has been going on for hundreds of years. They've just come out of the woodwork all of a sudden to cause trouble."

Later the association produced a statement accusing the women riders of trying to "crucify" the Cornet by threatening action through the EOC.

But in another town hall room, a small reconciliation committee was meeting in the hope of bringing both sides together. Mandy, aged 21, and Ashley, 23, had entered hurriedly, as only a few weeks

ago Ashley, a factory worker, had drinks thrown over her in a pub.

Although Mandy, a textile worker, well remembers a neighbour yelling "scum", what annoys the women's supporters, who have formed their own association under the guidance of former Scottish rugby union international Norman Fender, is that "lady riders" were allowed to take part earlier this century.

But in 1931 after a Miss Murgatroyd broke her leg when she was thrown from her horse, men complained that the presence of ladies "retarded the progress of riders", and a committee promptly prohibited them.

Mandy said it has long been her ambition to take part in the event.

Like her friends, she is a skilled horsewoman. "It is our heritage, our history, as much as any man's," she insisted.

A legal attempt to prevent women taking part in one of this year's rides failed — and the town was soon in turmoil — when a sheriff rejected an application for an interdict

'All this because of two women hell-bent on destroying something that's been going on for hundreds of years'
Hawick resident

'I cannot believe the hatred and bigotry in the place where I've grown up. It has made me feel sick'
Cllr John Scott

'It is our heritage, our history, as much as any man's'
Mandy Graham

'I was being threatened'
Journalist

A little radiation 'is good for you'

BNFL disowns safety chief's backing for low-level doses

Paul Brown
Environment Correspondent

DAILY doses of radiation are good for people and one day they might be required to promote health, an executive responsible for health and safety with British Nuclear Fuels has claimed.

John Graham, vice-president of BNFL's US subsidiary, was disowned by the company, who said his views did not accord with its policy.

Mr Graham gave a paper on the benefits of radiation to the Uranium Institute's annual meeting in London where he

ceptible to massive stress. Similarly the body could adapt to ionising radiation.

His remarks were reported in Professional Engineering, alongside comments from Morris Rosen, adviser on environmental affairs to the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna who said that evacuating so many people from the area around Chernobyl was an over-reaction. It had caused a deterioration in their quality of life.

He added that the radiation levels that people were allowed to receive from nuclear installations were far too stringent and should be relaxed.

His remarks are part of a debate in the industry about acceptable risks and fixing maximum doses for workers.

A BNFL spokesman said Mr Graham had made it clear that he was speaking in a personal capacity as immediate past-president of the Ameri-

can Nuclear Society and not for the company. "We disassociate ourselves from his remarks. We stick to the rules laid down by the National Radiological Protection Board."

The board's view is that all radiation is potentially a cause of cancer, however small the dose.

"There is no threshold dose below which the risk of tumour-induction would be zero," said Professor Roger Clarke, the chairman of the board which is the Government's official watchdog on human exposure to radiation.

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament said Mr Graham's statement was astonishing. A spokesman, Eddie Goncalves, said: "This sounds like the ravings of a crackpot. John Graham should say this to the relatives of the known victims of the nuclear age, including the children of Chernobyl and nuclear test veterans."

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Aggressive TV interviewers 'are moral delinquents'

Martin Walkerwright

ROUTINELY aggressive television interviewing was condemned as a danger to democracy yesterday by one of Britain's senior moral philosophers.

Baroness Warnock, former mistress of Girton College, Cambridge, and a specialist in ethics, described the indiscriminate use of "hectoring and bullying" as a betrayal of the subtle and effective use of courteous dialogue to expose the truth.

She referred to the "moral delinquency" of TV interviewers who adopted a standard tone when questioning anyone entrusted with power.

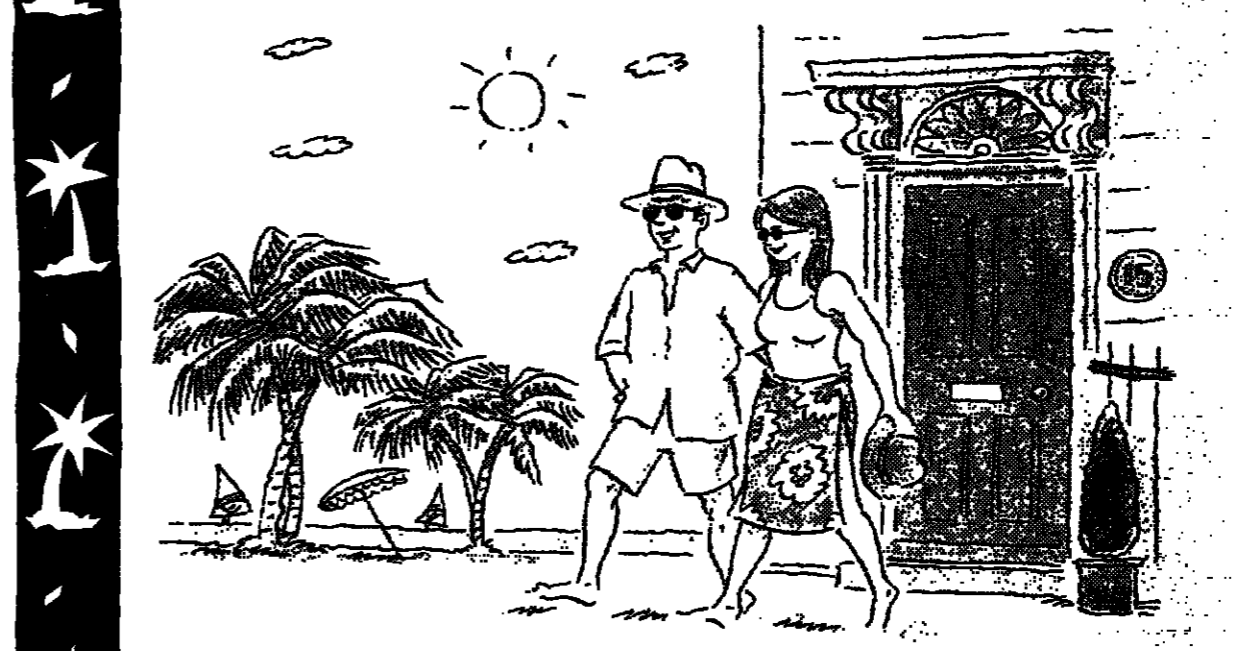
Her comments follow renewed protests from politicians about alleged rough treatment by broadcasters.

The tone is best described as "expose, humiliate and belittle" not only sabotaged effective and welcome criticism of politicians, but also had an insidious effect on the health of democratic life.

Lady Warnock said she was "astonished" that the "democracy is endangered if no politician is seen as having any concern for the common good. People naturally begin to ask: Why vote for them? Why trust any of them?" she said.

"People are liable if they are cynics to become genuinely ungovernable. We certainly do not want to go back to the old-fashioned deferential style of interview, but the pendulum has swung too far the other way."

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Dissident diplomat is told to go

Mark Tran in New York

THE Bulgarian foreign ministry suggested yesterday that the country's ambassador to the United Nations should resign after he accused his government of deliberately plunging the country into economic crisis "to enslave millions of Bulgarian citizens".

Slav Pashovski denounced the government led by Zhan Videnov, a former Communist, at a news conference at the UN and in an open letter on Thursday.

The virulent onslaught was aimed for maximum effect just as world leaders began arriving this weekend for the 51st session of the UN General Assembly.

"Common practice is for a state official, especially a diplomat, to relinquish his office with dignity when he disagrees with the politics of his government," the foreign ministry said in a statement in Sofia.

The ghost of communism is looming over Bulgaria

"His conduct is worthy of pity, and is another attempt to discredit Bulgaria before the international community."

The government has ousted Mr Pashovski of his ambassadorial powers, but it has not been able to revoke his UN accreditation without approval from President Zhelev, a founder of the anti-communist opposition.

Instead, for the second year running, the government has humiliated Mr Pashovski by excluding him from its official delegation to the General Assembly.

Mr Pashovski was left out of the Bulgarian delegation last year, even though he was on the UN's 50th anniversary commission.

Mr Pashovski said he saw no other means of fulfilling his duty as ambassador and citizen than to speak out publicly against the former Communist making a comeback in Bulgaria. Two years ago they won a solid majority in parliament.

"The ghost of communism is looming over Bulgaria, which means also over the

Balkans and over Europe," Mr Pashovski warned.

The ambassador also hinted that his government was reverting to its cold war cloak-and-dagger tactics against dissidents. He related a "strange accident" last year when he said New York police confirmed that connectors to his car steering wheel had been deliberately severed.

In a notorious incident, Bulgarian agents killed a dissident working at the BBC World Service in London in 1978 with a poisoned umbrella.

"Let us start a dialogue on this matter and put an end to the infamy of the 'Bulgarian umbrella' once and for all," Mr Pashovski said.

In his open letter to the prime minister, Mr Videnov, and the foreign minister, Georgi Pirinski, he accused Mr Videnov and his government — elected in January 1995 — of trying to monopolise power by sidelining the constitution and usurping foreign policy.

Mr Videnov has been at loggerheads with President Zhelev, who is fighting a rearguard action to prevent the country from reverting to its old communist ways. He also continues to endorse the UN ambassador in his post.

Bulgaria is suffering an economic crisis, in which the monthly inflation rate has soared above 30 per cent, and the national currency has plummeted. While most economists attribute the country's woes to mismanagement, Mr Pashovski said economic failures were not accidental.

They were, he argued, "a premeditated plot to make certain people richer and to enslave millions of Bulgarian citizens."

He told Mr Videnov: "Many people were fooled by your youthfulness, regarding it as a guarantee of the change from your communist nature to your proclaimed new socialist name. Once again, we had to discover that a name does not make a man, but it is rather the man that makes the name."

Because of its irresponsible economic policy, Mr Pashovski said, Bulgaria lagged behind other former Warsaw Pact countries, including Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland.

Minimal democratic reforms introduced by the former prime minister Filip Dimitrov were killed at birth, he claimed.



Italians pose in front of the Colosseum in Rome on the new Piaggio Vespa. The Vespa, the much-loved motor scooter which did for transport in post-war Italy what the Model-T Ford car did for the United States, celebrated its 50th birthday yesterday with sleeker contours but some retro features reintroduced.

Convicted Italian terrorist decides to hit the books

John Hooper in Rome

BRITISH teachers with problem children in their care should take heart from the predicament facing an Italian headmaster, Cesare Quarenghi of the Lussana school in Bergamo, has in his charge a pupil who is a convicted terrorist awaiting trial for masterminding a jail break.

Since school started last week, Antonio Tucciarello, aged 38, has been turning up for lessons alongside classmates more than 20 years his junior.

With apparently nothing in Italian law to prevent him, Tucciarello, a former member of the Prima Linea (Front Line) urban guerrilla group, is to study for his Maturita, the Italian

equivalent of A-levels. Other pupils seem unconcerned, but some parents are worried, and one has already said he plans to remove his son from the school.

This reaction is, perhaps, understandable. In the early 1980s, Tucciarello was sentenced to six years for terrorist activities. While in prison, he was tried and acquitted of the murder of a fellow-inmate.

Last year he fell foul of the law once again when he was arrested and charged with helping Felice Maniero, a gangster from the Venice area, to escape from prison.

Now he wants to make a fresh start.

"Let us hope no one prevents him from continuing on this new path," said his lawyer, Umberto Iorio.

Alex Duval Smith in Sainte Anne-d'Auray

FAMILY values — but not those of the Roman Catholic clergy — were at the centre of the Pope's message yesterday in an area which first heard of Christ 1,400 years ago from married priests and women deacons.

But such historical detail was of little interest to the 120,000-strong crowd, including 8,000 parents and children invited to this south Brittany shrine to highlight the day's theme — "Young families".

Nor had anyone heard of the Rt Rev Roderick Wright, but then the local newspaper, Ouest-France, had devoted only four lines to reporting the Pope's acceptance of the resignation of the Bishop of Argyll and the Isles.

José and Chantal Grevin felt it would be churlish to evoke such minutiae as of celebrity when the Pope, aged 76, has appendicitis. "We have prayed for his safe arrival in France. We were so afraid he would cancel," José said.

Nor did they want to dwell on its being only 7am and

their feet feeling like icicles after four hours of standing in a misty field beneath a gigantic deserted podium.

Long before the papal helicopter was sighted at about 10am, nature had provided a stunning curtain-raiser: as pilgrims filled the field, the sunrise behind the 19th-century basilica cleared the mist.

When the Pope arrived through, the pilgrims waved

would be considered a breach of secular practice to give children the day off school for a papal visit. But Brittany — opposed to centralism — has a high number of Roman Catholic private schools.

The Pope, who looked weak as he slowly read his 25-minute homily in French, called on the faithful to combat a "developing climate of indifference and individualism".

He condemned abortion, saying: "You are invited to show the world the beauty of fatherhood and motherhood. Every conceived human being has the right to exist, because the life which is given does not belong to those who have given birth to it."

He added that the Church was "also concerned with those who are separated, divorced, and divorced and remarried; they remain members of the Christian community".

Chantal de Gesincourt was scornful of critics who claim French taxpayers should not fund the Pope's visit because the country is constitutionally secular.

"What can be wrong with getting police and military to supervise an event which carries a message of peace?"

Pope embraces even divorcees

Nowhere else in France would children get the day off school for a papal visit

scarves — orange, yellow, blue or white depending on their diocese — as an organ augmented by Breton bagpipes played a French hymn.

Twelve bishops and 1,200 priests took their places for a two-and-a-half-hour mass, during which the Pope said a prayer in Breton and delivered the Creed in Latin.

The crowd was a mostly white and clean-cut. Free bottles of water from Aix-les-Bains were handed out by Scouts and Guides.

Elsewhere in France it

and praised Brittany's "solid Christian tradition".

Sainte Anne-d'Auray, a town of 1,600 people, was the scene, in the 17th century, of apparitions by Anne, the mother of the Virgin Mary. But the southern coast of Brittany owes its devout tradition to Welsh monks, who introduced Christianity in the fifth and sixth centuries.

They apparently thought nothing of recruiting married priests and women deacons — topics the Pope, wearing a stole featuring Celtic crosses,

and praised Brittany's "solid Christian tradition".

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World news in brief

Bosnian Muslim election turnout 'over 100pc'

AN INDEPENDENT pressure group monitoring Bosnia's elections said yesterday the turnout for last Saturday's poll had been suspiciously high, writes Julian Burger in Sarajevo. It was over 100 per cent in the case of the Muslim vote, raising the possibility of large-scale fraud.

According to provisional official figures, a total of 2,518,686 Bosnians voted on Saturday out of an estimated electorate of 2.9 million.

But the Washington-based International Crisis Group (ICG) said that once the figures were adjusted for spoiled ballots and refugees who were eligible but did not vote, the "staggering" adjusted turnout among Serbs was 96.5 per cent, and among Muslims 103.1 per cent.

Meanwhile, four Croats aged 17-19 were jailed but not charged in Split yesterday over the beating to death of a British soldier, Private Simon Jeans, on September 7.

Guatemalan peace accord

Guatemalan guerrilla leaders shook hands with army officers after signing a military agreement aimed at ending Central America's last and longest war.

The accord signed in Mexico on Thursday calls for cutting Guatemala's 43,500 troops and its defence spending by a third next year and eliminating elite counter-insurgency units. — AP.

Cash bonanza

Libya has started handing out \$6,000 (£3,000) in cash to needy families as part of a promise by Col Muammar Gaddafi to share the country's \$10 billion-a-year oil revenues with citizens. — AP.

Election victory

Estonia's President Lennart Meri was re-elected yesterday after five rounds of voting in the Baltic state. — Reuter.

Monkey business

A monkey mauled and killed a zookeeper who was fixing loose railings on its cage in the eastern Indian city of Calcutta, the Press Trust of India said yesterday. — Reuter.

Gay rights at IBM

Gay rights campaigners claimed a victory when the

Elections limp in Byron's footsteps

Voters would rather talk about their revolutionary poet-hero, writes Helena Smith in Messolongi

GREECE was about to hold a general election, but in Messolongi, the former socialist stronghold, you would not know it. You would not know it when you entered the town where Lord Byron died in the War of Greek Independence. And you would not know it when you left.

The bunting and posters, politicians' and rallies essential to Greek elections in the past, are not here. And, like the rest of rural Greece, that is exactly how the inhabitants of Messolongi want it to be.

"These elections are a waste of time and a waste of money," said Athina Davalou, a first-time voter seated in the Byron Cafe.

"The problem with politicians is that they only ever remember us on the eve of an election. Frankly, I'd rather talk about your great poet. Now he was a real revolutionary."

In 1824, Lord Byron died leading the Greek armed forces against the Turks. His statue, tall, white and gleaming, stands on the spot where his lungs and heart are buried and has pride of place in the town's Park of Heroes. Many of the locals bear his name.

However, for the first time ever in the run-up to the Greek elections tomorrow, pollsters say they are unable to predict a winner, even though the prime minister, Costas Simitis, called the vote confident of an easy win.

The lassitude is such that support for the ruling Panhel-

lenic Socialist Movement (Pasek) and the opposition New Democrats — the two parties which have dominated Greek politics since the past 20 years — is now believed to have dropped by 30 percent. In contrast, an array of smaller, left-wing parties have risen in popularity, pushing the two main contenders into a neck and neck race.

"We are, for the first time, trying to stage a European style election," says the veteran socialist and former Pasek MP Christos Basoyiannis.

After the death of Andreas Papandreu, one late prime minister we entered a new political era. What you are seeing is the result of that."

But in the impoverished villages and hamlets outside Messolongi, where running water and telecommunication are still considered a luxury, many would beg to differ. In Strongolovuni, a community of tobacco growers and sheep farmers, visiting party candidates are made to feel so unwelcome that they don't stop for long.

In another village further north, locals said they would not accept them at all until they are connected to the outside world with one road campaigning politicians have long promised them.

Last week, seven such communities took the unprecedented step of announcing they would abstain from the election altogether. As voting is mandatory under Greek law, the protestors have already been warned of the perils of failing to cast their ballots.

"We know we risk imprisonment but we want to protest what politicians have done to us and that is to close our school," sighed Elias Kostas. Strongolovuni's president. "Villages like ours are simply forgotten. Why vote for people who make you feel abandoned? We're not angry, we're just very, very disappointed with the way our country is run."

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Pact with Saddam warms Kurdish hearts and homes

But, writes David Hirst in Irbil, the victor of the civil war still wants protection from the West

FOR five years the people of "liberated" Kurdistan have been getting their petrol from the tins and makeshift containers of roadside hawkers, who smuggled it in from territory controlled by President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. But this week huge queues formed outside reopened petrol stations. There, the petrol sells for 1 per cent of its previous top price, and kerosene used for domestic heating is down from about 650 dinars a barrel (about 30 pence at market rates) to 10.

As a reward to the "sincere, repentant" Kurds, led by Masoud Barzani and his Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) — who recently enlisted Baghdad's help against rival Kurdish "traitors" led by Jalal Talabani and backed by Iran — President Saddam lifted his blockade of the north. Ditching fuel is the first, dramatic consequence.

Baghdad's al-Thawrah newspaper sent reporters to Irbil to record the delight of the populace, now ostensibly returning to the Iraqi fold, and their gratitude to the Victor-by-the-Grace-of-God — President Saddam's new title — whose magnanimity made this possible.

Al-Thawrah exaggerated. The Kurds were pleased, of course, especially the poor who shivered through last winter. They were even more pleased by the rebuff for President Saddam that quickly followed.

This was the meeting which Mr Barzani, the emergent "strongman" of Western-protected Kurdistan, held this week in Ankara with Robert Pelletreau, the United States assistant secretary of state for the Near East. It really began to look as if Mr Barzani's gamble, his "temporary alliance" with President Saddam, was paying off.

People thought they would get the best of both worlds: new economic ties with Baghdad, and the continuation — even strengthening — of Western protection.

It was always a vital part of Mr Barzani's gamble that the Americans cannot afford to abandon the Kurds, however angry they may be with a leader who turned to President Saddam to defeat his ad-

versary in a Kurdish civil war. Mr Barzani went to Ankara proposing a simple *quid pro quo*: what he calls "genuine" Western protection in return for a commitment to strike no "political" deal with President Saddam. "Genuine" protection means a more convincing defence than he reckons the Kurds have received so far, and one that is not against their other tormenters — Turkey and above all Iran. The failure to furnish all-embracing protection, he said, contributed to the Kurdish civil war, which in turn endangered the US's whole "containment" of President Saddam.

KDP officials say it is doubtful whether the US can ever furnish the degree of Western protection they desire. So the Kurds' commitment to US interests can only be as strong as they consider the US's commitment to their interests.

They would, they say, give their maximum commitment if the West supported their goal of complete independence. This is an unrealistic goal, and Mr Barzani has never encouraged his people to think otherwise.

The cost of caution has been high. The Kurds have enjoyed effective self-rule for five years, yet, juridically, they remain part of Iraq. So the world, led by the US, imposes on them the same sanctions as on Saddam-controlled Iraq.

This has gravely impeded Kurdish economic development, exacerbated internal political tensions, and militated against the growth of coherent governing institutions because they would smack of the eventual statehood which the American ally Turkey, and others, cannot countenance.

If the Kurds, in their provisional "safe haven", have no clear legal or political status now, they do not have a guaranteed place in any post-Saddam Iraq either. Mr Barzani, haunted by past betrayals, also has personal misgivings about the reliability of the US.

In spite of these doubts and resentments about US policy, Mr Barzani came away from Ankara much reassured. "We understood each other," said one of his negotiating team, "and before long you will be seeing a KDP delegation in Washington."

The US, he said, had suffered a salutary shock and, thus chastened, it would seek to ensure that no such mishap recurred. "It was suddenly dawned on them," he said, "that they need us almost as much we need them."

If he is right, and the US does perpetuate or strengthen its protection, it will not be

just for love of the Kurds. KDP officials have no illusions about that. To be sure, the "safe haven" originally came into being for their sake, but with the passage of time it has become an essential element of the "containment" strategy whose main objective is to safeguard Western interests in the Gulf.

KDP officials believe that the US cannot let President Saddam come back to the north by stealth, even with their own connivance — because that would mean a gradual accretion of his power, leading to his eventual rehabilitation. Nor can America let him back by brute force — that would lead to another Kurdish exodus.

Another factor in the new Kurdish-Western relationship taking shape is that the Kurds now have much more to contribute than in their years of internal feuding. Or at least they will have if Mr Barzani makes a success of the opportunities that await him as the sole, uncontested leader of his people.

If he does, the West will be protecting an entity which is much better able to protect itself and make itself less vulnerable to the interference of regional powers to which Kurdish disunity inevitably leads.

Mr Barzani has promised to turn his bizarre, precarious little realm into a "citadel of democracy and pluralism" to give parliament authority over the executive and build a non-partisan administration. Most important, perhaps, he will dissolve the competing peshmerga militias, including his own, and replace them with a regular conscript army.

Such promises have been heard before, but the Barzani-Talabani conflict obliterated them. Now that Mr Barzani has resolved it in his favour, it remains to be seen if he keeps his promises, or turns his inheritance into another one-party system. This would eventually begot the same kind of hostilities that he has just ended.



AMERICAN troops fire live rounds during training in the Kuwaiti desert near the Iraqi border yesterday. The Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, attacked President Clinton's handling of the Iraqi crisis, writes Martin Walker in Washington. "This is an enormous defeat for the United States... that will reverberate for a generation in the Middle East," he said — despite opinion polls showing that 61 per cent of Americans "staunchly support" the president's actions. PHOTOGRAPH: LAURENT FERREUS

As a reward to the "sincere, repentant" Kurds, led by Masoud Barzani and his Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) — who recently enlisted Baghdad's help against rival Kurdish "traitors" led by Jalal Talabani and backed by Iran — President Saddam lifted his blockade of the north. Ditching fuel is the first, dramatic consequence.

Baghdad's al-Thawrah newspaper sent reporters to Irbil to record the delight of the populace, now ostensibly returning to the Iraqi fold, and their gratitude to the Victor-by-the-Grace-of-God — President Saddam's new title — whose magnanimity made this possible.

Al-Thawrah exaggerated. The Kurds were pleased, of course, especially the poor who shivered through last winter. They were even more pleased by the rebuff for President Saddam that quickly followed.

This was the meeting which Mr Barzani, the emergent "strongman" of Western-protected Kurdistan, held this week in Ankara with Robert Pelletreau, the United States assistant secretary of state for the Near East. It really began to look as if Mr Barzani's gamble, his "temporary alliance" with President Saddam, was paying off.

People thought they would get the best of both worlds: new economic ties with Baghdad, and the continuation — even strengthening — of Western protection.

It was always a vital part of Mr Barzani's gamble that the Americans cannot afford to abandon the Kurds, however angry they may be with a leader who turned to President Saddam to defeat his ad-

Bokassa in hospital with brain tumour



Marc Koffi in Abidjan

JEAN-BEDEL BOKASSA, the former self-styled emperor of the Central African Republic, is seriously ill and may need surgery to remove a brain tumour doctors said yesterday.

Mr Bokassa, aged 75 (above), has been flown to the Ivory Coast city of Abidjan, for treatment.

Mr Bokassa seized power in the Central African Republic in 1966, later crowning himself emperor. He was ousted in a French-backed coup in 1979. On his return from exile in 1986, he was tried and sentenced to death for murder and embezzlement. The sentence was later reduced to 10 years in prison.

Released in 1993, Mr Bokassa was banned for life from standing in elections. In July he asked for an amnesty so that he could stand as a presidential candidate in elections planned for 1999. — Reuter.

No EU loan for S Africa steel plant

Julie Wolf in Brussels

SOUTH AFRICAN relations with the European Union were dealt a blow yesterday when the European Commission came out against a £48 million loan to help build a steel plant near Cape Town.

The decision reflected concern that the project would boost world steel capacity when Europe's own steel industry is struggling. EU sources said. The European Investment Bank (EIB), which has up to £240 million to lend to South Africa in 1995-96, could still overrule the commission, but this would be politically difficult.

The EU's commissioner for development, Joao de Deus Pinheiro, argued that refusing the loan would be at odds with the EU's policy of promoting the economic development of South Africa.

Others contended that the loan would be inconsistent with the EU's policy of refusing state subsidies to the steel sector unless they are matched by cuts in output capacity and jobs.

Moreover, steel produced at the new plant would mainly be for export, which could push down already low world prices and further undermine the EU's steel industry. At the centre of the commission's decision appears to be the view that South Africa does not qualify as a developing country and should therefore abide by rules on state subsidies and competition similar to those in the EU.

Mr Pinheiro's supporters also fear that the decision will be seen as a slap in the face for the government of President Nelson Mandela.

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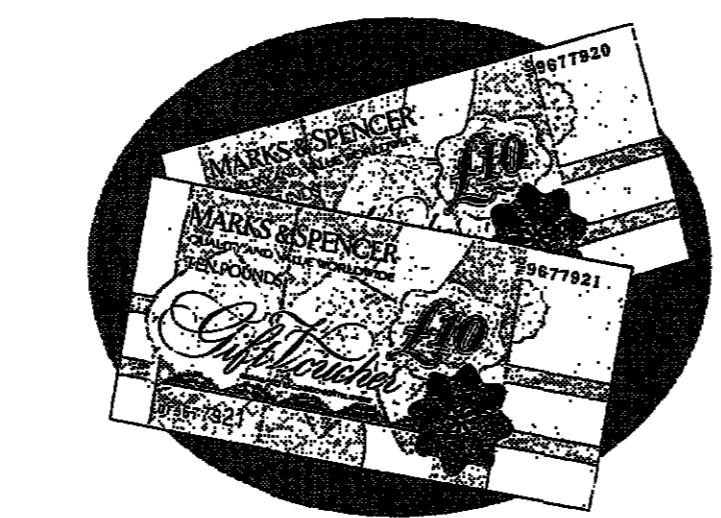
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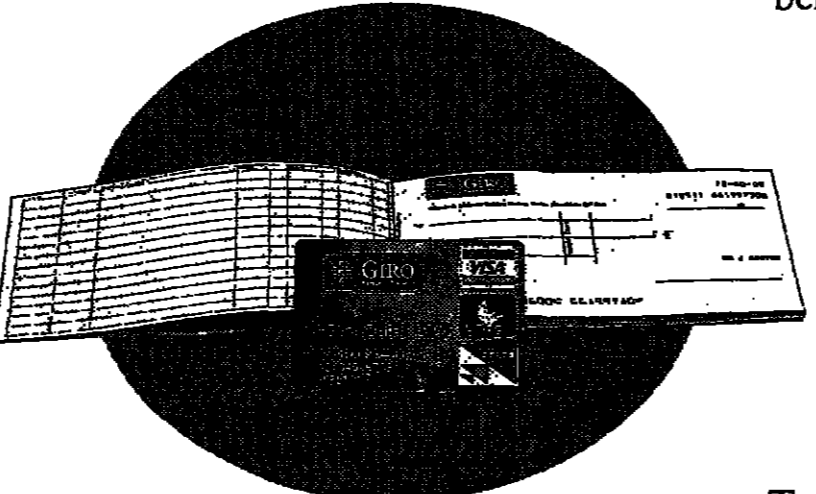
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A desirable residence

What sort of people want to be prime minister? How do they cope with the pressure and the paperwork? Peter Hennessy searches history for clues — and, looking forward, offers Tony Blair a piece of advice

WE ARE about to enter a fascinating year for prime-minister-watchers. Not only is there a strong possibility that the post will change hands next spring, but the period between now and the transition of power from Major to Blair will be punctuated by several studies of how the job has been done in the past and how its functions might be better performed in the future.

The premiership question ranges way beyond scholarly interest and academic importance. Mrs Thatcher may have called it "the most fascinating job in the world", but it's one whose requirements, in the words of a very senior insider, now stretch "absolutely beyond what any mortal could properly be expected to handle". For all the seepage of power from Downing Street thanks to an integrating Europe and a globalising economy, avoidable under-performance by the temporary resident in Number 10 affects us all.

The premiership season begins tomorrow with Michael Cockerell's television investigation *How To Be Prime Minister* (BBC2, Sunday 8.10pm). This month sees, too, the publication of Stuart Ball's and Anthony Seldon's edited study of *The Heath Government 1970-74* (Longman, £16.99), which contains an examination of the prime minister and policy-making by John Ramsden plus a complementary chapter by Ball and Seldon on Number 10 under Ted. Next week my *Muddling Through* (Gollancz, £20) includes conversations with both Heath and Jim Callaghan on how they ran their cabinets, plus cameo studies of various kinds of the other premiers who filled the years 1945-90. Next month will see the appearance of the authorised life of one of the nicest and most underrated of the post-war incumbents, with D R Thorpe's *Alec Douglas-Home* (Sinclair-Stevenson, £25), and I shall begin a series of Gresham Lectures at Gresham College which includes treatments of Churchill's last premiership, Eden's tormented and tragic stewardship, and John Major's great survival act, as well as portraits of the Heath and Callaghan periods.

If he wins, Tony Blair will be the least experienced prime minister since Ramsay MacDonald kissed hands with an anxious George V in January 1924, and found himself presented shortly after with a memo from the monarch outlining what duties he owed to his sovereign — something, I suspect, the Queen would be too tactful to send to Mr Blair in the early days of May 1997, though he will be briefed on the very special relationship that exists between Downing Street and the palace. Inevitably such a lack of the kind of Whitehall experience on which Jim Callaghan, rightly, sets such store tomorrow, when recalling his own ascension to the top job in 1976, will be a matter of intense discussion generally as the election approaches.

For his part Mr Blair will, no doubt, continue on his course of reading the biographies of past premiers for the purposes of comparing and contrasting their conduct of what Michael Cockerell calls "the toughest and loneliest job in Britain". Though, as Heath tells Cockerell in tomorrow's programme, "there is no standard prime minister," echoing Asquith's famous argument that "the office of the prime minister is what its holder chooses and is able to make of it".

What one might call *The Year Of The Prime Minister* will be rounded off in the autumn of 1997 by Anthony Seldon's as-yet-untitled biography of John Major (to be published by Weidenfeld) which, though not authorised, has enjoyed the cooperation of the man himself in its preparation. Sadly, Ted Heath's long-awaited memoirs won't quite be ready for the 1998-97 premierfest, though he now has a gifted little team working with him in Salisbury. This is a special pity, as Heath was in many ways the best-prepared post-war premier in terms of the prior thought he had given on how best to re-equip the central mechanics of state.

A decade ago Anthony King of Essex University found the British prime minister a curiously understudied figure compared to the United States

Jim Callaghan says of his arrival as prime minister: 'I felt somehow that I'd become a guide to lead the nation into the future, and at the same time a trustee of all that was best in our past'

president. Biography was — and to a large extent remains — a surrogate for the kind of functional/institutional studies at which American scholars have excelled since Dick Neustadt's pioneering work a generation ago. Some British premier-watchers, myself included, are in the process of trying to remedy this deficiency. And Michael Cockerell's documentary, in addition to its fascinating scoop on Harold Wilson's contemplation of a special operation to assassinate Idi Amin in 1975, does every observer of the premiership a service by getting previously unknown or formerly non-attributable reflections (plus a wealth of from-the-horse's-mouth material) into the public domain.

The historical approach, in which Cockerell is steeped, is crucial to an understanding of the prime-ministership, a job which, as Harold Wilson once explained, is largely "organised by history". Jim Callaghan is especially eloquent on this when he recalls tomorrow the evening moments after he finally stepped across the threshold of most British politicians' ambitions in April 1976.

"I stood there for a moment," he says of his arrival in the cabinet room as prime minister, "and it was a very profound feeling. I felt somehow that I'd become a guide to lead the nation into the

future and at the same time a trustee of all that was best in our past." Callaghan was squarely in the romantic, May 1940 tradition, when Churchill on his arrival felt "as if I were walking with destiny and that all my past life had been but a preparation for this hour and this trial".

Ted Heath, by contrast, reveals himself tomorrow to be more in the Attlee mould (Attlee, when asked if he felt "destiny" had overtaken him in July 1945, replied characteristically: "No, I had not much idea about destiny"). Heath, who is much more of a romantic than he lets on, "I've always thought that inside that extraordinary exterior is a little pink, quivering Ted trying to get out," as one of his cabinet colleagues once remarked of him fondly, tells Michael Cockerell when asked the "destiny" question: "No, No. Really. No, I didn't spend my time looking around and saying, 'How historic this is, Heath... No, No, No. You get on with the job.'"

But what is "the job"? Nobody has ever produced a specification for it. The Cabinet Office and Number 10 had a kind of stab in the late 1940s, and their efforts are preserved in a fascinating file at the Public Record Office labelled *Function Of The Prime Minister And His Staff*, which, so far as I can tell, was never shown to Mr Attlee or any of his successors. The officials listed a dozen functions for their boss.

I attempted to update them last year and found they had grown to 33, ranging from appointing regius professors to launching the need arose, a Trident missile. And this tally involved only governmental duties. It excluded all those extra-governmental

and non-parliamentary party functions that will absorb a very high proportion of Mr Major's time between now and polling day.

The British prime minister is still a near-stranger to statutory duties. But the job is punishing, because it is a kind of sump into which sink the important functions of state that are neither exercised by the head of state (the Queen) nor her individual ministers according to the requirements, and the attendant public expenditure, which falls to them under laws of various descriptions.

Again the Cockerell investigation brings out the different personal flavours very nicely, contrasting, for example, Jim Callaghan ("I had no desire to be absolutely *au fait* with everything that was going on" and his successor "I don't have time to relax very much. I'm always on the job").

Douglas Hurd, who saw three PMs at work from close quarters (he was Heath's political secretary in Number 10 and was a cabinet minister under both Thatcher and Major) is the best provider of advice to the next in the line of apostolic succession from Robert Walpole. "The main advice must be the use of time," he declares tomorrow. If it were Tony Blair I would ask Mr Hurd, who has thought more about the problems of "overload" than any



The young Harold Wilson dreams of destiny on the steps of Number 10, Downing Street

other contemporary politician to do for me what Harold Macmillan asked Attlee to do for him when he became prime minister in 1957 — to lead a thorough examination of "the burden on ministers", including the prime-ministerial load, and to recommend ways of easements were feasible.

If Mr Hurd were so commissioned, he might start with the flow of paper across the premier's desk. Using the Number 10 archive at the Public Record Office, which now reaches 1965, I conducted an audit this year of the explosion of files passing through the PM's in-tray be-

tween Attlee in 1948 (215 files) and Wilson in 1965 (580), an increase of 173 per cent. I suspect such growth has continued over the past 30 years.

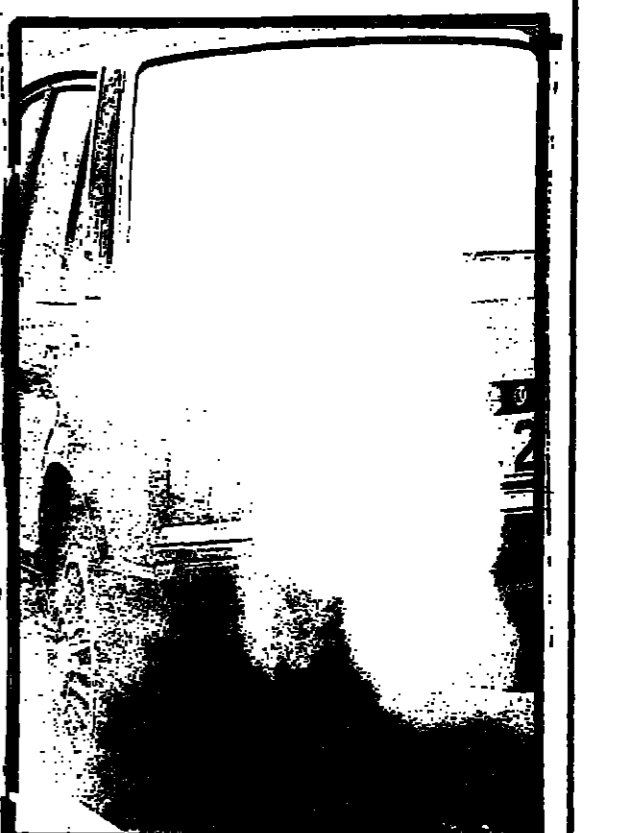
Paper is but one indicator which demonstrates that, unreformed, ours is a system of central government which produces a cumulative overload at the top that leaves

even the more titanic premiers bone-tired, intellectually exhausted and physically overstretched and, when their turn comes to depart, painfully mindful of Asquith's other famous dictum on the premiership — "Power, power? You think you are going to get it but you never do".

THIS WEEK'S ESSAYIST, Peter Hennessy, is Professor of Contemporary History at Queen Mary and Westfield,

London, and Gresham Professor of Rhetoric at Gresham College, London. His *The Hidden Writings: Unearthing The British Constitution* is published next week in an updated paperback edition (Indigo, £7.99)

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Fearless — most of the time



Martin Kettle

THE Liberal Democrats, who inaugurate the party season proper next week at Brighton, pride themselves on being very different from the other two parties. And in some respects, of course, they are. They have some distinctive policies, notably on tax, the environment and electoral reform, at which many in the Labour Party also look with wistful envy. They have a distinctive political culture, which even today manifests itself in a civilised earnestness of manner. Above all, they are different in that few of them think seriously in terms of national — as distinct from local — government. Yet

the sense of difference which is such a source of pride to Liberal Democrats is now becoming more apparent than real. As usual, there will be a lot of talk at Brighton next week about how the Liberal Democrats are this distinctive and radical party, how they are the only one of the three prepared to face the difficult issues about tax, how they are the only one that is not in lock to vested interests. The attitude towards Tony Blair will be endlessly patronising and smug. Yet an awful lot of this talk is bogus.

This is a party of very selective fearlessness. Once again, for instance, there is to be no debate at Brighton about defence policy or nuclear weapons. It is on these subjects on which this party's predecessor, and indeed Paddy Ashdown himself, have in the past had fearless things to say. Now they either judge it more prudent to remain silent — just as they condemn Labour for doing so — or else they have given up trying, frozen in the politics of the 1980s. Or take two other examples. There are no debates this year on either Europe or on trans-

ported. Both of these are policy areas in which the Liberal Democrats have traditionally carved out extremely distinctive policy positions — as the pro-European (and hence the pro-single-currency) party and, even more so, as the greenest of the main political parties. A party which sought to emphasise or celebrate its distinctiveness would surely give extensive debating time to both.

Yet there is no Europe, presumably because they "wish to offer no hostages to the Tory Party and the Europhobe press. And there is no debate on transport either, in spite of the attention which Ashdown has himself paid to the issue in the recent past, when he has made the unrestricted growth of the motor car a talisman of his own willingness to talk straight about real problems. This cynical omission can presumably be explained by the party's fear that they could not hold Newbury if the conference — as it assuredly would — overruled the party's pro-bypass MP, David Rendel. I am not trying to paint the Liberal Democrats as a party

transformed overnight into a bunch of hypocritical trimmers. That would be an injustice. But I think they are becoming increasingly a party like any other. Like the other two parties, they have calculated the content of the conference by the impact they expect it to make on the television news. There will be a lot of jibes against Peter Mandelson and political packaging at Brighton, but the Liberal Democrat hierarchs are nowadays just as prepared as their Labour counterparts to tailor their own political events to impress the floating voters.

And who is to say that they are wrong in that? On one level, they are only being conventional professional in their approach. For years, the Liberal Democrats were mocked by their opponents and by the media for a certain woolly amateurism. Now they have exchanged their woolies for suits it is a bit much to denounce them for that too. Like Blair, but without his determination, resources or success, the Liberal Democrats are themselves part of the convergence of British politics. To some degree, that

is to be expected in a pre-election period. And yet it shows every sign of becoming a permanent feature of the politics of the foreseeable future.

This raises, I think, a complex but important wider question about the future of a healthy form of party politics. It used to be argued that the great virtue of party politics in a democracy was that different parties could put substantively different, even sharply contrasting, programmes to the electorate and that the voters would then make one choice or the other. Today, that model seems far removed from any reality. The parties may detest one another with undiminished passion, and there may still be massive cultural differences between them, but the substance of their disputes is very much narrower than it once was.

THIS leads the parties to emphasise spurious or marginal differences rather than substantial ones. Everyone recognises this in the contest between Labour and Conservative, but the Liberal Democrats are consenting adults in convergence too. I accept that the parties have been driven to converge by electoral realities rather than

by their own wickedness or lack of principle. If the voters had shown that they were happy to listen to and be swayed by a serious public argument about nuclear weapons, Europe or the motor car, then the parties would have responded.

But the effect is to drive out what used to be thought of as real choice. A thorough-going state socialist option is available to voters in the shape of Arthur Scargill's Socialist Labour Party, but there are few takers. An alternative politics exists in the form of the Green Party, but that party very nearly decided not even to bother contesting elections. It seems as though the only non-convergent parties which can survive in this political environment are local separatist movements such as the SNP.

Instinctively, I don't like the convergence. I wish the contest between the parties was sharper and more radical. But it isn't good enough simply to blame the parties for this process. The process reflects the nature of our times. We live in a society which may be dedicated to endless consumption choices, but which seems to recoil en masse not just from the political choices on offer to it, but from the very notion of political choice itself.

Luciano Benetton keeps it in the family

PROFILE: Italian mogul who goes his own way talks to Pauline Springett



Luciano Benetton... Talk of the succession is premature

PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN GODWIN

LUCIANO Benetton, 61-year-old president and co-founder of the eponymous Italian business empire, would almost pass as a traditional tycoon. The tweed suit is perhaps a little better cut than that of the average Brit. But it is the unruly mass of curly white hair and the green tie emblazoned with sheep jumping hurdles which suggest that Mr Benetton may not be an ordinary mogul. The sheep are a witty reference to the flock of multi-coloured sheep which helped open the world's largest-ever

Benetton store this week on Oxford Circus. Still, it is perhaps an advance that he is wearing clothes at all. He was once photographed nude for an advertising campaign, and more recently he and his family were pictured wearing straitjackets. Around 40 years ago, Luciano's sister Giuliana presented him with a multi-coloured jumper she had made herself. The pullover attracted much admiration, the siblings started a small business selling their sister's woolsies and the seeds of an empire were sown. The holding company, Edi-

zione Holding spa, controls four main arms: manufacturing, which encompasses the fashion group; property; food retailing and motorway restaurants; and a miscellaneous collection of businesses which includes a bank. Benetton is a family concern. Luciano is the president, brother Gilberto is vice president, Carlo is the production director of Benetton worldwide and Giuliana is the creative force. Numerous Benetton children now work in various parts of the empire, including Alessandro, Luciano's son, who is tipped to take over one day.

If Luciano has his way, that day will be a long way off. Talk of the succession is, he says, premature. "I don't know what retirement would be." Perhaps, he adds, he would be forced to work less if he was paralysed in his bed. He works an 11½ day, five days a week. Away from work he professes to prefer the quiet life. "I like places that are not too crowded." The family nature of the business is very important to him, despite expansion having necessitated employing non-family in important jobs. Benetton sticks to family and close friends for key posts.

"We would hardly ever welcome outsiders." The group is 72 per cent owned by the Benetton family, with the rest split almost equally between Italian and American institutional investors. Mr Benetton is dismissive of the concerns of external investors. "As a rule we don't intervene on share prices. I can say that the share price is often ruled by mood. There is no reason for us to take action." However, he stresses that this year's profits are on course to be higher than 1995 when the group made 230 billion lire (£30 million) after

recovering from a sharp fall in demand the year before. The company will be debt-free by the year end, he insists. Benetton's fashion range may have been built on jumpers but it has sold a wider range of clothes for some years. The Benetton name has gained worldwide recognition thanks to the often controversial, some would say deliberately offensive, advertising campaigns featuring images such as a black woman breastfeeding a white baby and a man dying of Aids. Mr Benetton is unapologetic. "I agree with the overall approach. These images

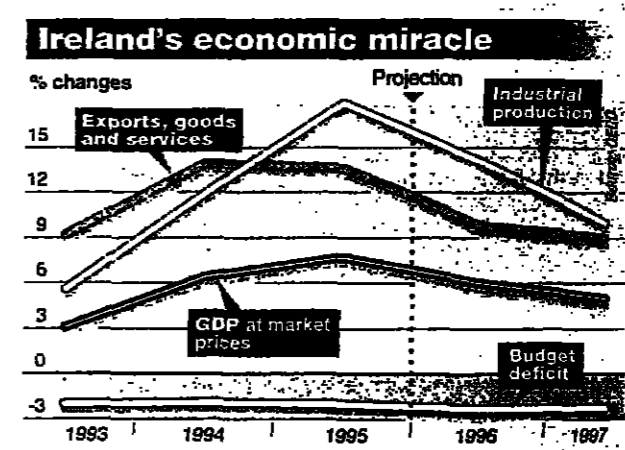
are part of life and part of entertainment." He adds that different images shock different cultures. "We do not do this deliberately." Is there anything he would draw the line at depicting? "I wouldn't claim our product is better than other people's." Equally bizarre is Benetton's plunge into the world of Formula One motor racing. But the team won last season's championship with a drivers' and constructors' double. "It's proved we are well organised and successful in something that is not our core business. It enhances our image." But not all publicity is

Is there anything he would draw the line at depicting? 'I wouldn't claim our product is better than other people's.'

good. Next March, Mr Benetton is due to stand trial on charges that he was a party to the fraudulent bankruptcy of the Fiorucci clothing company. He insists on his innocence, saying that he parted company with Fiorucci a year and a half before it went bust. "We never ran this company," he said. His lawyers are on the case. Which leaves him free to concentrate on redefining Benetton — they are moving from boutiques to larger stores. "I have the feeling of never having reached my goal. There is always room for improvement and growth."

Money men look to ride the Irish tiger

Strong economy and a common ancestry might disarm the Americans. But are the numbers all blarney?



Sarah Whitebloom reports

TAKE one trillion dollars, 80 American fund managers and a certain amount of Guinness, and somehow, somewhere, some investment cash ought to find its way to Ireland. That, at least, is the strong expectation in Dublin following last week's Pensions 2000 conference, which attracted some of the biggest investors in the US to the Irish capital and Belfast. The big money men came — and were impressed — despite the recent flare-up of the 'Troubles in the North. With a set of economic figures which would do one of the east's tiger economies proud, it is scarcely any surprise — although some of the American guests believed the numbers almost too good to be true. Ireland's real GDP growth rate last year was 6.5 per cent, inflation was down to 1.3 per cent in May and 45 per cent of its highly educated population is under 28 years of age. The North's growth rate is also moving rapidly — at around 3 per cent — and it is tipped to become the UK's fastest growing region by the year 2000.

Overseas firms face taxes of just 10 per cent, but Mr Hennessy insisted the IFSC's success is "not just driven by the tax factors". "There is a strong flow of well-educated labour." Over the next month or two, according to Mr Hennessy, some dividends are expected from the conference. "Some of the groups certainly were interested and we expect to be following it up with meetings in the near future," he said. "We are optimistic."

The IDA's confidence is not out of place. The republic has already attracted some 1,100 overseas firms from all over the world to its shores. And its success in bringing in dollars is impressive — as many as 447 of its inward investors are American companies. They now employ more than 50,000 people across the country. A further 50 US firms are employing around 14,000 people in the North. US sources say the rate of return achieved by such investments is around four times that enjoyed by direct investment in Britain. It is not only Dublin and its environs which have benefited. Overseas businesses have been setting up in far flung parts of the island. Mr Hennessy said: "They are not just coming to Dublin. We are trying to encourage companies to go to the country." Obviously, the total cessation of the Troubles would add to Ireland's attractions — in the republic and more particularly, the North according to some US fund managers. There is another appeal which Dublin is not slow to trade on. More than a few of those who made the trip last week had surnames which would suggest they owe some allegiance to Ireland. Mr Hennessy admitted ancestry "can make a difference". He maintained that it can help an Irish firm get through the door to make a presentation if the potential investor claims to be of Irish descent, as 40 million Americans do. But: "It comes down to pounds, shillings and pence — descent doesn't guarantee anything."

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Eurocats

I SAY, I SAY... WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EMU AND BSE?

EMU WON'T DIE OUT NATURALLY!

KippelWibbels

مكتبة الأصيل

Maxwell banks in firing line

DTI set to publish report on Mirror Group flotation

Dan Atkinson

TOP City firms including the merchant banks Samuel Montagu and Salomon Brothers are braced for criticism of their roles in the controversial sale in 1991 of £250 million of shares in Robert Maxwell's Mirror Group Newspapers.

The indications are that the Department of Trade and Industry inspectors have nearly completed their investigation of the circumstances surrounding the hugely hyped share offer.

Also in the line of fire will be any brokers who helped Robert Maxwell to mount a secret share-support operation weeks after the troubled float in order to prop up the level of MGN stock.

To ensure fair trials for Maxwell criminal-case defendants, newspapers were able to report only Mr Justice Millett's finding that the banks Credit Suisse, Lehman Brothers and Swiss Volksbank could keep proceeds of \$81 million pledged to them by Robert Maxwell.

Along with Montagu and Salomon, the broker Smith New Court was an adviser to the float; it has since been bought by Merrill Lynch. None of the parties was able to comment last night on the inquiry.

The DTI inspectors, John Thomas QC and chartered accountant Raymond Turner, now represent the only surviving Crown inquiry into the affairs of the Maxwell empire, which was sunk by a \$225 million black hole discovered in pension funds weeks after the tycoon's death in November 1991.

Saturday Notebook

Standing alone starts to be risky



Alex Brummer

In the turbulent world of investment banking, where a single derivatives or foreign exchange trade can wipe out tens of millions of pounds in the blink of an eye, fund and asset management has long been considered a safe, reliable source of income.

In London — an employee of an overseas subsidiary. The Bank of England's new approach is designed to gain a better understanding of such risks and to relay them to fellow regulators.

The 90,000 savers in the three DMG European trusts have been fortunate. As a result of previous difficulties at Morgan Grenfell, which was swept up in the Guinness scandal of the late 1980s, the once-illustrious, independent merchant bank is now part of Deutsche, which has one of the banking world's strongest balance sheets.

Following discussions between the Bank of England and the Bundesbank's supervisory arm in Berlin, Deutsche agreed to do the right thing and bail out investors. In an exercise which could eventually cost the German owner up to £500 million in investment losses and compensation to investors.

2,500 insurance staff at risk in Lloyds deal

Sarah Whitbloom

CONCERN was growing last night over the fate of thousands of jobs following the disclosure that Lloyds Abbey Life is set to become a fully owned subsidiary of the Lloyds-TSB group.

The announcement — which came as Lloyds announced a top board-level reshuffle — is expected to spell bad news for the insurance workers in the group, with back office rationalisation and other cuts expected to follow the takeover.

The bank refused to comment yesterday on likely losses. But it confirmed the widespread expectation that Sir Brian Pitman, the present chief executive, is to become chairman and Peter Ellwood, a deputy group chief executive, is to move behind Sir Brian's old desk. The Bank of England gave its approval to the two appointments.

Lloyds-TSB already owns 62 per cent of Abbey Life, but yesterday it put paid to "heightened speculation" over its intentions by announcing it has agreed in principle to buy out the minority shareholders. The deal will value investors' holdings at 63p per share.

There is speculation in the City that Lloyds could sell part of Abbey Life in an attempt to eradicate the overlap between its operations and those of the TSB's insurance arm, which it inherited following last year's takeover of the rival bank.



Upwardly mobile... Peter Ellwood (left), new chief executive of Lloyds-TSB, and Sir Brian Pitman, who is to become chairman

concerned about the future of the staff in the insurance areas.

According to the union, more than 2,500 staff in the TSB insurance arm and Abbey Life could be affected.

The City, meanwhile, welcomed the deal as "commercial logic" and hoped to see cost benefits coming through.

"There has to be a potential for back office cuts and reduced development costs," said one leading analyst.

He maintained that one of the main issues for the Lloyds group now is how to secure cost savings following its various takeovers. The unions have been braced for big job losses since the takeover of the TSB and are forecasting cuts of up to 10,000 staff throughout the group.

Clearer gives staff last word on works council

Industrial Staff

LOYDS-TSB, the only one of the main clearing banks which has failed to establish a works council, yesterday said it was prepared to consider its position if staff and unions asked it to do so.

The stream of big British corporations rushing to set up works councils before a deadline set by European legislation continued to

swell yesterday. Barclays Bank was among a number of other companies to agree to establish a council yesterday, two days before the deadline to put in place worker consultation on cross-border issues.

Any multinational with more than 1,000 employees must set up councils if two or more EU countries.

Lloyds insisted yesterday that it had established good communications with its unions and staff, and saw no necessity to set up a works council. The bank employs some 72,000 staff in the UK and 1,400 on the Continent, mostly in Germany and Spain.

A spokesman admitted, however, that after Sunday the group would have to establish a forum for consultation if its staff requested that, suggesting that the bank was not prepared to countenance a legal challenge over the issue.

The Anglo-Dutch consumer products group Unilever was another of the large companies to establish a council yesterday.

BA moves to ground USAir claim

Keith Harper Transport Editor

BRITISH Airways today urged a US judge to throw out claims made against it by its partner, USAir, which it accused of suffering from "corporate amnesia".



In dispute... BA chief Bob Ayling 'regrets' partner's action

In a motion before a New York court, Bob Ayling, BA's chief executive, said: "We regret that USAir has brought these proceedings against us. There is no basis for them and we believe that this is not an appropriate way to conduct business between members of an alliance."

The motion to dismiss the claim, filed in the southern district court of New York, argues that USAir's petition shows only that its new management is "disappointed" that BA is seeking an additional partner in American Airlines.

Mr Ayling says it is free to do so under an agreement with USAir in which it has a 24 per cent share. BA's submission states that USAir has resorted to "an artifice to conceal the obvious deficiencies in its pleading." It adds:

"Even modest scrutiny of the complaint reveals that, as a matter of law, all of USAir's claims should be dismissed. BA states that USAir has been unable to identify a single provision of the 1983 agreement between the two companies that BA is supposed to have broken. BA also claims that USAir's management apparently hopes to escape its obligations under the investment agreement and to achieve a more favourable agreement."

ings with AA. BA wants to maintain the alliance with USAir if the larger merger with AA goes ahead.

BA's move demonstrates the increasing distrust each partner has of the other, which is unlikely to disappear even if the proposed merger with AA collapses. BA maintains it has fully briefed USAir on its arrangement with AA in a way which would strengthen its position in the United States.

BA may launch a legal challenge against the Government's decision to impose noise limits at Heathrow, Stansted and Gatwick from the beginning of next year.

Merrill braced for Orange charges

Mark Tran in New York

MERRILL Lynch, the Wall Street powerhouse, was bracing itself yesterday for formal charges of security law violations stemming from the bankruptcy of Orange County.

\$14 billion in securities to the investment fund and underwrote hundreds of millions of municipal bonds for the county.

The SEC has concentrated on Merrill because it did so much business with Orange County.

At the time of the bankruptcy filing, the pool managed by Orange County treasurer Robert Citron held \$20 billion in securities, \$14 billion of which was bought from Merrill, which made in one year alone at least \$242 million from dealings with the county.

Stagecoach goes offshore

THE smallest part of British Rail's passenger operations — an 8.5-mile line on the Isle of Wight — was yesterday handed to Stagecoach, the bus and rail operator's second rail franchise win in less than a year.

The Island Line is one of 25 pieces of BR's passenger network being sold off by the Government, which is giving Stagecoach an average annual subsidy of £1.86 million over the five-year life of the contract. In the first year, it will receive £2.01 million, declining to £1.75 million in the final year.

The Island Line, which employs just 44 people, is the only regional franchise which has its own track and signalling, obtained from Railtrack

on a 25-year lease. The line connects with mainland services through ferry links between Ryde and Portsmouth.

Stagecoach said it would not be reducing the line's revenue but would introduce a residents' travel card, giving local people a 40 per cent reduction on off-peak fares. It has promised the franchise director, Roger Salmon, that it will increase passenger volumes and punctuality.

Stagecoach, Britain's largest bus company by market capitalisation, secured its first franchise in December when it was awarded the contract to run South West Trains, the largest of the regional franchises let so far, with an annual passenger revenue of £280 million.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS			
Australia 1.9016	France 7.7325	Italy 2.322	Singapore 2.1880
Austria 16.08	Germany 2.28	Malta 0.5460	South Africa 6.78
Belgium 46.87	Greece 365.90	Netherlands 2.5580	Spain 19.65
Canada 2.0775	Hong Kong 11.70	New Zealand 2.1540	Sweden 10.11
Cyprus 0.7010	Ireland 55.35	Norway 9.8025	Switzerland 1.8833
Denmark 8.9125	Portugal 0.9885	Portugal 233.50	Turkey 155.708
Finland 6.9730	Israel 4.91	Saudi Arabia 5.79	USA 1.5180

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Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian

Anticipating the mango . . .

Carmakers are changing gear to serve the 'empty nesters' demanding more fun, says CHRIS BARRIE

Totally orgasmic" is how Jaguar chairman Nick Scheele describes the XK8, the 2-seater sports car which will do a shade under 160mph when no one is looking.

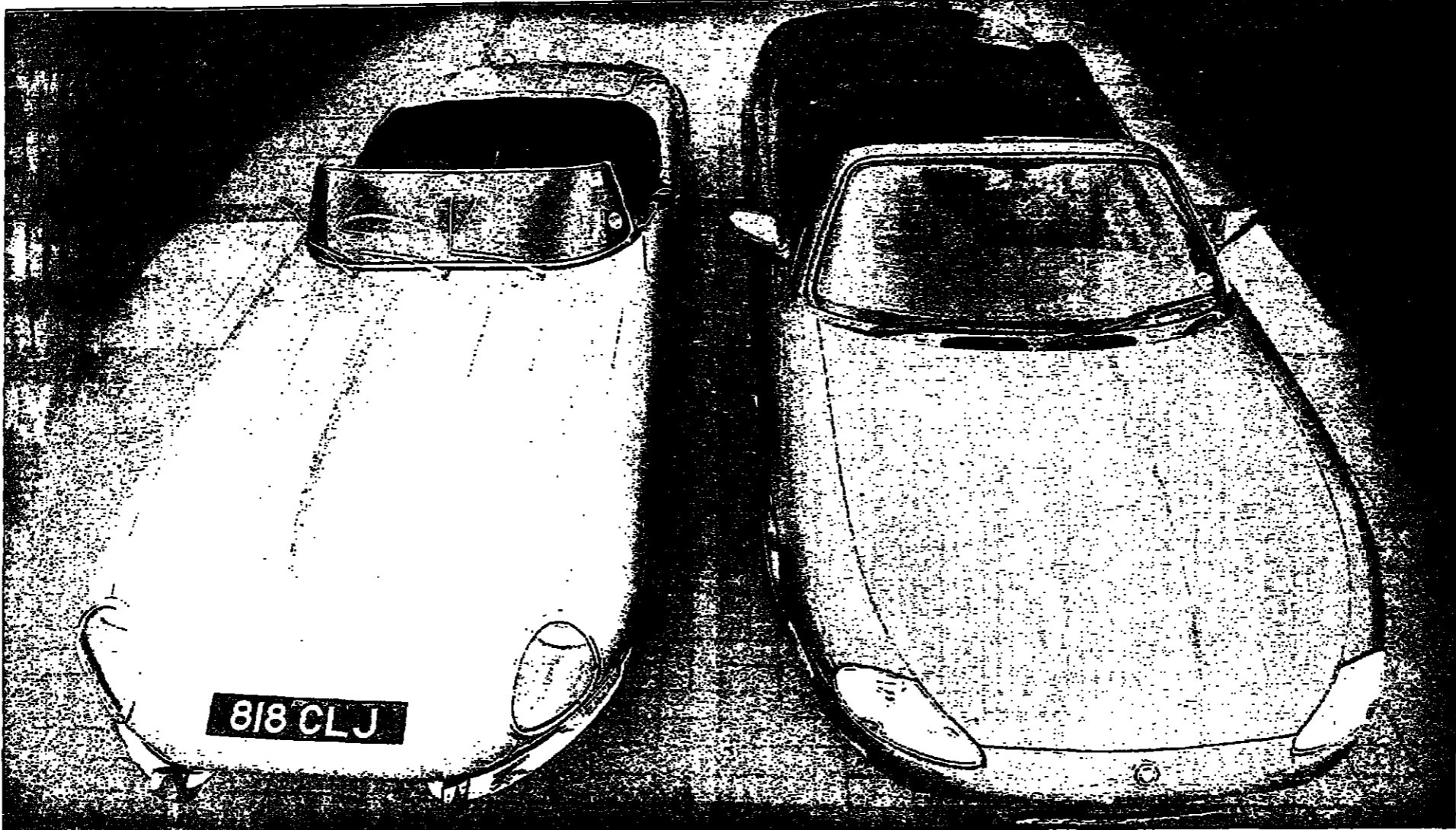
Warning to his theme, the American likens the sensuality of the E-Type's successor to eating a mango del Manila, the king of mangos. "You'll always take the long road, go cross-country rather than on the motorway, with the XK8."

He draws back from saying the car is actually better than sex. But Jaguar, now owned by Ford, clearly believes that it has developed a stunning £47,000 supercar that will generate as much excitement as the E-Type once did, burying forever its hapless past as a British Leyland subsidiary.

The company is not alone in turning to the sports car to achieve classier status.

Tomorrow Rover is holding the first birthday party for the MGF, its stylish but far cheaper sports car. The celebration, to which all 6,000 UK buyers have been invited, will highlight Rover's effort to haul itself out of mass market car manufacturing and into the more profitable world of premium brands.

Other companies are rushing new products into the sports car market too. Fiat and Alfa Romeo have



Family resemblance... The lineage of the £47,000 Jaguar XK8 is clear from the legendary 1962 E-Type Series 1 convertible to its left at Jaguar's Coventry plant. With a 4 litre V8 engine, top speed is 156 mph and acceleration 0-60 mph in 6.4 seconds

PHOTOGRAPH: STEVE HILL

launched the Barchetta and the Spider. Porsche has launched the Boxster. Mazda has revamped its successful MX5, and BMW and Mercedes-Benz have launched skirt-hitching Z3 and SLK convertibles respectively.

At the top end of the market, Aston Martin has roared past its previous sales record of 591 cars — set in 1986 — with 729 sales last year. The company, like Jaguar a Ford subsidiary, is selling more cars overseas, preparing an

even higher performance version of its DB7 and talking of extra production capacity.

Suddenly the western world is awash in stylish sports cars. Congestion and pollution may worsen, but there are plenty of drivers who want to have fun.

There are straightforward economic explanations. Official figures released on Wednesday showed that high street sales are booming in a way not seen since the late 1980s. Disposable incomes

matter to sports car makers because the open-topped car is usually a second or third car — or, in the case of Aston Martin and Jaguar, one in the "stable".

Professor Jim Randle, formerly Jaguar's engineering director and now head of the automotive engineering centre at Birmingham University, compares the revival of car design and advertising in the 1980s. Prof Randle suggests that drivers are again enjoying the simple pleasure of the wind on their faces.

John Kiff, a senior researcher for the International Car Distribution Programme at Cardiff Business School, says sales are growing on the back of "empty nesters" — men and women whose children have left home. "They are stress relief machines," he says.

Jaguar marketing director Phil Cazaly says this "reward factor" — having brought up the family, now I want a toy — will be important to the XK8's success. Buyers also have to be and are, presumably confident about priorities. Discarding the usual compromises, XK8 buyers want two seats and 156 mph. The car is a statement.

Fine marketing, but will it work? And will it last?

ONLY 10 years ago manufacturers were arguing that sports cars made no commercial sense. The TR7 and the MGB had foundered on the rocks of BL's finances, US emissions laws and appalling build quality. MG owners saw their marquee tacked on to Maestros and Montegos.

Sports car enthusiasts turned to "hot hatches", particularly Volkswagen's Golf GTI and Peugeot's 205 GTI. Built on the same production lines as their pedestrian sister models, these hatchbacks were cheaper to develop and make, they outperformed the traditional sports car and they had four seats.

But then came the rising sun of Japanese car company Mazda. A specialist in producing cars for niche markets, Mazda decided there was a market for the traditional sports car and its MX5 proved them right. More than 10,000 have been sold in the UK since 1989 and this year could set a new record.

But the sports car revival has to be kept in perspective. Michael Garside, an economist at the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, says today's sports cars represent only a fraction of the car market. In their heyday,

they say about you. These cars are never driven properly. It is how they make you feel that counts.

Professor Randle adds that society's collective guilt about the car may be diminishing. Having heard forecasts of the death of the sports car due to speed limits and then seen speed-orientated car design and advertising in the 1980s, Prof Randle suggests that drivers are again enjoying the simple pleasure of the wind on their faces.

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Fine marketing, but will it work? And will it last?

sports cars, especially British ones, accounted for a much larger market share. An indication of that legacy is the size of the MG Owners' Club which, with 50,000 members, is thought to be the world's largest single marque club.

And the new car market is very different. Women buy more cars and have a greater say in the choice of family

car. Sports cars are less masculine in design as a result. Mr Cazaly says: "What appeals to people is the exterior styling. If the car is gorgeous, there is no difference in its appeal to men and women."

More than 30 per cent of XK8 sales should be to women, compared with 20 per cent for its predecessor, the XJS.

Nick Scheele draws a distinction between the cheaper sports cars and the luxury ones like the XK8. History shows that the sports car market is cyclical owing to the demographics of the car buying market. If the past is anything to go by, the market will peak in three years and could leave manufacturers jostling for falling sales.

By contrast, luxury sports car sales have been steady for some time and dominated, until now, by Mercedes and Lexus. The market is steadier because extremely rich people tend to be unaffected by economic downturns — though they may not want to be seen spending in hard times.

Jaguar hopes to tap into this affluence and, buoyed by sharply better productivity and quality levels, to make good profits. This explains the XK8's mix of high performance and comfort.

But it may be that the economics of car manufacturing have now changed enough to ensure that the sports car is here to stay, cheap or expensive, falling sales or otherwise.

Prof Randle says flexible manufacturing systems now make it commercially feasible to build volumes of 5,000 to 10,000 units a year, for sale at between £10,000 and £25,000. These are far smaller production runs than were feasible in the days of large, dedicated production lines.

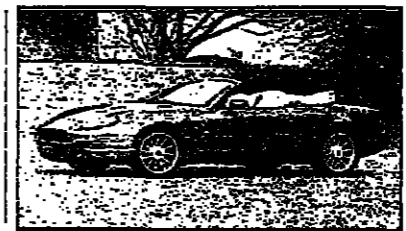
The largest cost is not the body, but the engine. However, these can be adapted from engines developed for other cars. The secret is to borrow as much as possible from them and be disciplined about cost.

The XK8 is in a different league but the same applies. It has its own engine and the factory will make about 12,000 a year at first. But Mr Scheele admits that the car could not have been developed unless the company was part of the Ford empire. Apart from finance, Ford gave Jaguar access to its research and its buying muscle meant suppliers were prepared to take the company's small orders seriously. Aston Martin says the same.

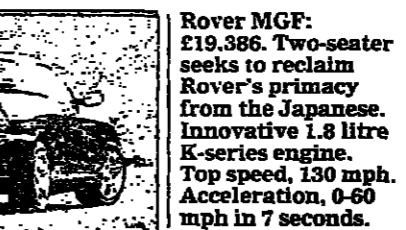
It is one of the ironies of motoring history that top marques such as Jaguar and Aston Martin are now dependent on the maker of Mondeos and Escorts for their future.

Worth a test drive . . .

Aston Martin DB7: £82,500. Bond favourite updated. Supercharged 6-cylinder 5.2 litre engine. Top speed, 165 mph. Acceleration, 0-60 mph in 5.5 seconds. Add £7,450 for convertible.



Rover MGF: £19,386. Two-seater seeks to reclaim Rover's primacy from the Japanese. Innovative 1.6 litre K-series engine. Top speed, 130 mph. Acceleration, 0-60 mph in 7 seconds.



Mazda MX5: £18,010. Car that convinced everyone sports cars were worth making. Recently revamped. 1.8 litre engine. Top speed, 123 mph. Acceleration, 0-60 mph in 8.6 seconds.



Quick Crossword No. 8237

TOUGH PITCH
O H N U R I O
P O T I O N F O R M S
E O T G E S O
N E W T P R A N D I A L
S C Y T G I
E N S U R E C L I N I C
C I A H V I
R E M E D I A L A B U T
E I T I R G L U
T U L L E D I A M O N D
A H U L E O
P R O T O P L A S M

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8						
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13				14		15
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17		18				19
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21						
22						
23						

Solution No. 8236

- Across**
- 1,5 Home everyone can look into (8,4)
 - 9 Seat — procrastinate! (5)
 - 10 Cupboard — ministers! (7)
 - 11 Street with Bank (12)
 - 13 Make wealthy (5)
 - 14 Amble (5)
 - 17 Bulbs for salad (5,6)
 - 20 Mistake (flower) (7)
 - 21 Charge to account (5)
 - 22 Jug (4)
 - 23 Former name of African country (8)
- Down**
- 1 Four forth or be effusive (4)
 - 2 Dressed skin (7)
 - 3 It doesn't really pay (5,7)
 - 4 Withdraw (from larger body) (5)
 - 6 Possessed (5)
 - 7 In recent times (8)
 - 8 (Given to) wool-gathering (6-6)
 - 12 Prudent or aware (8)
 - 15 Public transport (7)
 - 16 Quarter (5)
 - 18 French river (5)
 - 19 Volcano (4)

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**Does he dye his hair?
Which was his favourite funeral?
What did his arm smell like when it was split open by a bullet?**

Tomorrow, Lynn Barber; Britain's finest interviewer; skewers Britain's most enigmatic politician

The Observer

Mark Lawson
The who would be

مكزامن التحصيل

Saturday 21 September 1996

The Guardian the week

Mark Lawson heard God calling him to the priesthood. And he heard the siren call of the girl in the pew next door. In the week when the world heard of another bishop found wanting, he looks back at the hormones and hesitations of...

The boy who would be Pope

IF THINGS had turned out differently I might have written, this week, not a Saturday article about celibacy in the Roman Catholic Church but a Sunday sermon on the same subject. Except for the strong possibility that — like former Bishop Roddy Wright of Argyll & the Isles — I would, in fact, be breaking off to pen a billet-doux to a divorcee of the parish, or a furtive birthday card to my secret teenage son. But blessedly in my case, the libido got the better of the vocation before ordination.

Like many pious young Catholic males, I was mildly urged towards the clergy. My mother would have been proud; my father — who, despite his own success, had a brooding sense of the insecurities of existence — advised that it was one way of never having to worry about employment or accommodation.

Family pressure and a fear of the outside world's competitive structures are, I would guess, two of the major lures to ordination. The third catchment area — poor working-class boys, especially in Ireland, where the Church operates, rather like boxing, as a financial parachute — did not apply in this case.

The first step for those who thought they might have "heard the call" was to spend a week with the religious teaching order which ran my school. Joining in the life

of the community and praying for guidance, you were interviewed on the final day by the Director of Vocations.

All applicants for jobs they might not want prepare a plus-and-minus ledger. On the positive side was the fact that teaching, writing, performance and fame — four of my ambitions at 17 — were all still possible under the cloth. There is a theatricality in religion — in the delivery of a sermon and, most of all, the celebration of the Mass — which can make it seem a glamorous profession, even an extension of showbiz and the media. Indeed, priests had television series; popes published books.

On the debit side was the fact that sex — another major aspiration at the time — would have to remain a pipe dream or, indeed, a wet dream. However, I was suffering unrequited love for a girl at the local church and clearly remember thinking: this will show her. There was, it is now clear, an error of logic in this operatic locking-up of what she hadn't wanted anyway, but it seems certain that at least some young men do take holy orders to spite their hormones.

The Catholic Church's problem in this area is that most of its potential recruits to the priesthood are virgins, many of whom assume, with the apocalyptic lack of confidence of adolescents, that they will remain vir- page 14



NATIONAL SAVINGS
Investment Ideas

HELPING YOU MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SAVINGS AND INVESTMENTS

SELF-ASSESSMENT IS APPROACHING, so I'm interested in simple tax-free investments. Any ideas?

James Glover, Bristol

Mr. James Glover
Bristol

Buy...
...for a full...

...hours a day...

the week that was

Them on them

The global view

Let us stop giving Bossi such importance, both as the enemy of the Motherland and as the apostle of its redemption. And let's leave him to his Grail, his marches, his amponies [of water from the Po] and his proclamations of an independent Padania. In the Italian Democrazia there is a great deal more that is rotten — as we've seen recently — over which to busy and worry ourselves. Let's not get the wrong target and not change the subject.

Cortese della Sera

All Finns have settled for their own level of

devotion to drink, but only a few know their limits. Let's face it, Finns drink. Finns drink to get drunk. Finnish society exercises no social control over drinking. And so what? Drinking is a tradition, a custom and part of our national character. City Magazine, Helsinki

The Bosnian election is an order just as the Dayton peace agreement was ordered by the international community. It is understandable that Bosnia's political will and its authentic goals are insufficiently respected. In essence the Dayton accord has not solved a single key Bosnian problem. Oslobođenje, Sarajevo

Us on us

The British view

I hear some of you yell: "We have every right to know what kind of sick pervs are living in our midst and what they're up to." Quite. Some papers are now contemplating publishing a list of names and addresses of offenders — why? So that the nearest you can give the sicko the beating he obviously deserves, eh? No thanks. That might satisfy the mindless few but it has no place in a civilised society.

The Lancaster Citizen News

Prayers of the Roman Catholic World have been going out to Bishop Roddy Wright. This news-

paper has been subjected to a barrage of e-mails. Many often tar all journalists with the same brush. This is not the way we go about our business, being ever mindful that we also live in a small community and know how we would like to be treated if we did something that made the headlines.

The discovery of gold under parts of the Pennines could bring a rash of prospectors to the area. Farmers are worried that pan-handlers are trying to cash in.

The discovery of gold under parts of the Pennines could bring a rash of prospectors to the area. Farmers are worried that pan-handlers are trying to cash in. There is a real danger of "Klondikers" invading the area.



THEME OF THE WEEK BLUE

THIS week the Labour Party that tried to abolish this week's Creation Week... The discovery of gold under parts of the Pennines could bring a rash of prospectors to the area.

graphing three galaxies being born so far away in space that the light from them has taken 10 billion years to reach us. Apart from being the earliest event ever witnessed, the scientists were surprised to find the galaxies were colored blue when they should have been orange or red.

So how did the Conservative Party do it? How did Smith Square succeed where even Papi Cola failed when it tried earlier in the year to make us think this to be the best thing of its kind?

That brew of chemicals and organisms which gave birth to life wasn't even thought of in the year 50 AD. It's a probably coincidence that this is the colour of the week. It's been a relatively good one economically for our own government.

Lad was in a class of his own

This week last year: September 13 1995

A YEAR ago, the double life of Brian MacKinnon came spectacularly to light. Aged 30, he had been so desperate to qualify as a doctor that he returned to his former school, Bearsden Academy in Glasgow, adopted a new identity as 17-year-old Brandon Lee and passed five Highers with straight As.



Wonder of the fifth form... Brian MacKinnon

about his relations with his classmates. He came back on September 23. "When we were waiting to board the flight, I saw a chap smirking at me as if he knew exactly who I was," he recalls. "Then I picked up a paper and read why. It was a bizarre experience."

not impressed. After the fuss died down, he was left as an unemployed 32-year-old. No medical school would look at him. He spent two weeks in the autumn and two in the spring writing a book with the aim of persuading any medical school in the world to offer him a place.

although many publishers were interested, all declined to publish his account. He sold his story to the Mail on Sunday for £50,000 last July on the understanding, he says, that they would be serialising the book. What appeared was an interview spread over two weeks which culminated, to MacKinnon's frustration, in an interview with Professor Brian Jennet, Dean of Glasgow University's medical school — the man MacKinnon blames for his original failure to finish his medical course.

THE VERDICT CULTS ON THE BOX

Should Scientology be allowed to advertise on TV?

NO "Scientology represents a group that has been described by a high court judge as corrupt, sinister and dangerous. How on earth can we now allow it to advertise? If an organisation can be seen to be potentially harmful to individuals and society as a whole then surely we need to protect the viewer accordingly."

YES

"Christians get free publicity on radio and television every day, and so do politicians. Why shouldn't other liars have the same freedom of speech, so long as they pay for it, and so long as we have the same freedom to say what we think of their claims?"

The boy who would be Pope

page 13 sins for ever, so that they are not actually giving anything up. Yet, ordained and older, they suddenly discover themselves unexpectedly attractive to women. In fact, confusingly, their caseload proves to be not a "hands off" but a "come on". There are women who derive particular erotic excitement from trying to unpick the moral padlock in which priests are held. I once heard of a worshipper in her thirties who was allegedly responsible for the sudden removal of a series of young curates from a Catholic parish. Beyond that, the breakdown of family life has, paradoxically, meant that a priest faces far more temptation than the average man.

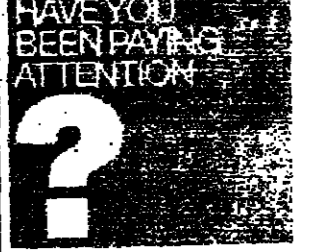
ally, the Scottish Church announced this week the appointment of "childcare officers" in every diocese. But, thankfully, the men who taught me did not seem subject to that blot on their promises. The pressure on their celibacy was heterosexual. A teacher would fail to reappear at the start of a new term and we would be told that he had — in the past — been a member of the "gangs to work among the poor in London" or was "on a retreat". On an advance, more like — for the departed master would generally be spotted a year or two later in the local shopping town, browsing triumphantly in Mothercare with an alumnus of the neighbouring Catholic girls' school.

On the last afternoon of my stay with the community, the vocations director summoned me to his study. He asked if God had called me, and my reply was that I couldn't be sure. We talked about the gifts of the religious life and its limitations, especially celibacy. On this, he said the wisest words on the subject I've ever heard: "In the end, it's largely a matter of biological luck. Some men are not very interested in sex. Some are even nearly neuter. They make the best clergy. Otherwise, it's very tough. We don't give pills or operations."

listed from the display of the world's possibilities. But a priest is, in a particularly cruel way, chained outside the window of the shop at which he's not allowed to spend; most Saturdays, a couple plugging their bodies to each other; most Sundays, someone else's baby in your arms. How can there not be regrets? Even the Pope said on Thursday that the ideal, though necessary, might seem "virtually impossible to live up to". What does he mean? That the Vatican has a black book of other episcopal scandals? That

and, furthermore, the female to the unclean. An old priest once asked me, with a shudder, how a man "could celebrate the eucharist with hands that have just touched a woman intimately"? But, as Graham Greene and others have pointed out, prior defecation and urination are no bar to the celebration of the mass and, as we now tragically know, there are priests who have faced a congregation next to the altar boys they have molested. Even so, the solution may not be as simple as some have suggested. The abolition of priestly celibacy seems to address two of the Church's central problems: the shortage of priests and the potential for private hypocrisy and public scandal created by the no-sex rule.

Pomp and holy circumstance as bishops meet in Rome... priests get television series, popes publish books. PHOTOGRAPH: CAMERA PRESS



- 1. Which eligible bachelor agreed to marry his sweetheart after a famous 58-year romance? (a) Liam Gallagher (b) Chancellor a chance (allegedly)? (c) Pout and about this week (below), Who? (d) Peter Kerry

- 4. Who vanished? 5. Who vanished (again)? (a) Liam Gallagher (b) Chancellor a chance (allegedly)? (c) Peter Kerry (d) The Archers (e) The Maxwells



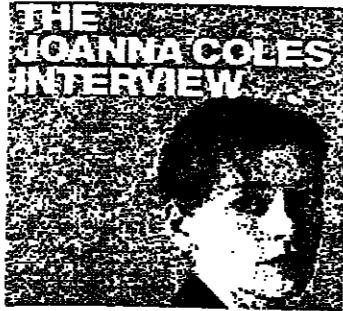
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July, 1996

Duet in perfect harmony

Iris Murdoch and John Bayley still make a fine team. But just now, she's suffering a slight block



"BELL not working. WE ARE HERE. Knock vigorously." I do, and the cheery face of Professor John Bayley promptly appears at the window, chewing baked beans. "Come in, come in my dear," he exclaims, opening the front door and waving an oval piece of toast. "I find beans just the thing for lunch don't you? We're not lunch people, we're dinner people, that's when we eat properly, so come in, come in."

He whisk us through a chaotic hall, past a vast, unsteady pyramid of books and into the most eccentric drawing room I have ever seen. There are heaving carrier bags spilling their paper guts across the floor, old stones and sticks, wild piles of books and papers which look as if they may have reproduced on their own the night before. The walls are Georgian Green and though it is midday it's dark, the window unimpeachable to the light because of the fig leaves outside creeping across the pane.

As we sit down, Dame Iris Murdoch spirits herself gracefully into the room, and I suddenly notice there's an abandoned glass of red wine tucked away under each arm chair, as if perhaps in case of emergency.

Hello, she smiles, her eyes wide and friendly and although I have already explained on the telephone, I explain again that I'm here because there are rumours she has given up writing for good. It is not the easiest of questions to ask such an intelligent and prolific author, and I am worried she may think me rude for even trying. But can it be true?

To my huge relief she smiles. "Well, I'm trying to do something, but it hasn't, well..." and then she starts laughing.

"Just a bit of a block I think," interrupts Bayley, her husband of 40 years, cheerfully.

"Yes, it's not, well, I certainly am trying," she replies.

Now 71, Dame Iris is without question one of the finest writers of her generation, to date producing 26 novels including the hugely acclaimed *The Sea, The Sea*, *The Black Prince* and *The Red And The Green*. Her last book, *Jackson's Dilemma*, was published in hardback last autumn, but nothing has followed. Has she suffered from this kind of block before? "I think this is a very bad one," she says absently.

"It has occurred before darling," says Bayley, leaning towards her reassuringly. "You've had periods of lying fallow, as one might say, rather like a field. Because what is really rather extraordinary about you darling, if I might say, is that you don't mind being interrupted, and you don't keep pompous writing hours. You simply write whenever you feel like it."

"Perhaps," she says flatly.

"I wonder if she still reads a lot?" "Yes, I do." And do you still enjoy writing when you can?

"Well, I enjoy it, when I've found a way out, as it were. But um, otherwise..." and she smiles wanly, almost apologetically.

"Otherwise I'm in a very, very bad, quiet place."

We are all quiet for a moment before Bayley says to her: "In the past, because of your philosophical mind perhaps, you've tended to get the whole novel worked out in meticulous detail haven't you? It's almost darling, if you don't mind my saying, like a mathematical theorem. The whole thing worked out in advance."

"She falters. "Well I..."

"I keep suggesting she should start in an ordinary way. You know, Tom and Dick were sitting in a pub"

"Oh, but I'm afraid I can't do that," says Iris quickly

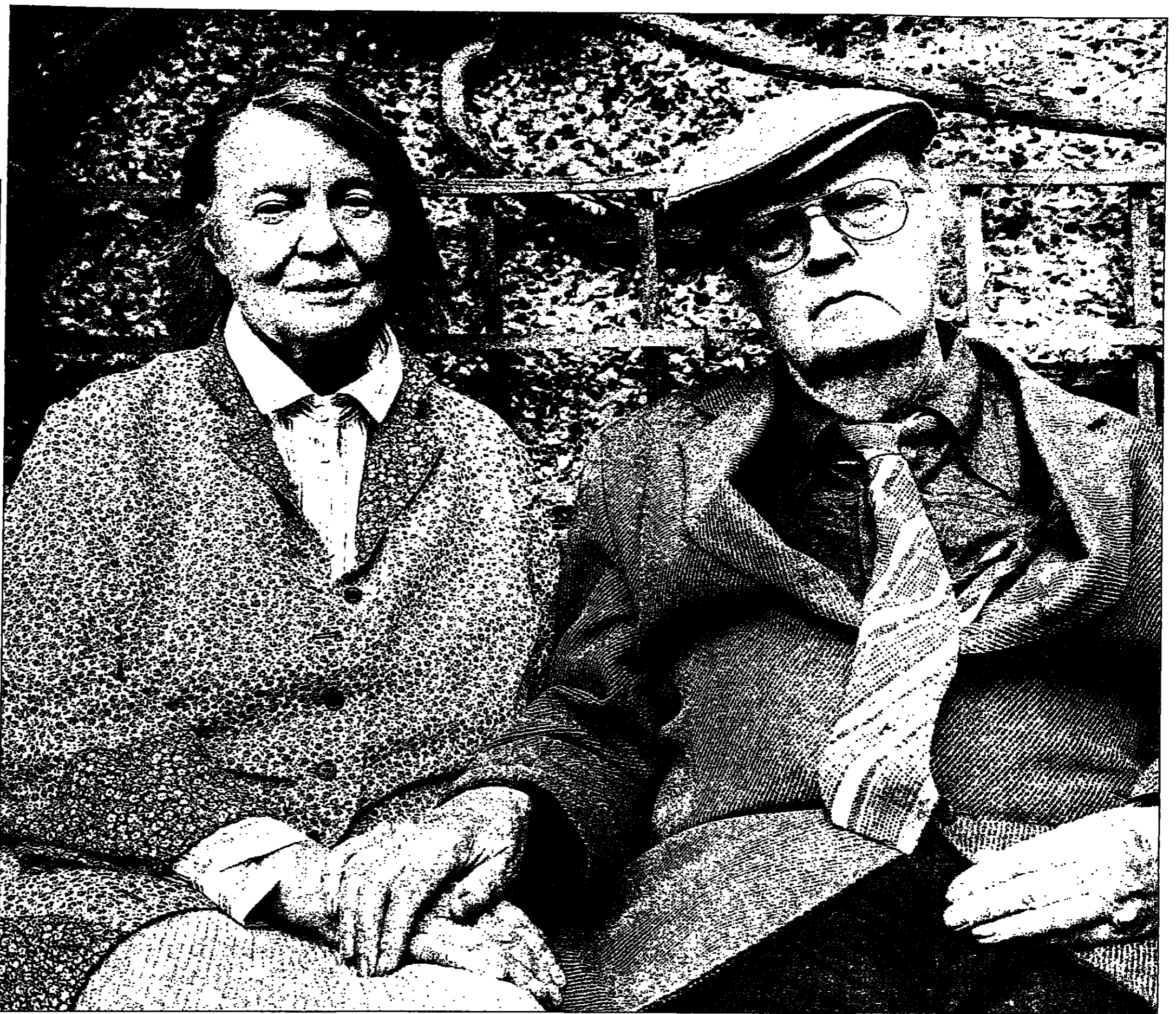
years ago, heads off to make coffee. "I feel gloomy," says Dame Iris gently. Does she think this will pass, or is it simply old age?

"I think I just haven't yet got anything which will help me," she whispers, adding bravely: "I expect something will turn up."

Did she find it difficult to live up to her reputation? "Well, the books I've written in the past I've done quite quickly, and known what to do and been geared up by them. But I'm afraid at the moment that I'm just falling, falling... just falling as it were. But I may get better. I hope so."

"There is a copy of *Conversations With Isaiah Berlin* lying open at her feet. What else is she reading at the moment? "Um, well, quite a lot of things, but I haven't found anything which would be really useful to me. I find I haven't got anything at the moment, and this is really rather startling to me. I feel as though maybe the whole thing has packed up. But I hope, I really do believe actually, I could get on and find myself in a happier state, but I don't think so at the very moment. I'm just wandering. I think of things and then they go away forever."

Bayley returns bearing a tray with a pottery jug of coffee, and to make room we remove another tray smothered in old corks, crisp autumn leaves, several pebbles, old notes, a large stone and some photographs. "Simple but



The Dame and the Professor... 'I enjoy writing when I've found a way out. But otherwise I'm in a very, very bad, quiet place,' says Murdoch

PHOTOGRAPH: EAMONN MCGABE

effective," says Bayley, nodding at the jug, "as long as you don't mind a few grounds in the mouth!"

"You must pour," says Iris, patting his arm. "You must pour."

"Four? Oh, I thought you meant paw! And he starts scrabbling at the air as if he's a cat, and we all laugh. Their relationship is not only touching, it's still fresh and young, making sense of what marriage is for. How, I ask, do they spend their days together?

"I've slipped out of the university now," says Iris. "But I do every day try and collect something or other to myself." Then she gives me a beautiful, generous smile. "Your arrival may help me."

"I wouldn't be surprised," says Bayley, spooning two sugars into each mug. "Sometimes pictures start her off. We went to the National Gallery yesterday."

"I do like pictures," says Iris.

"We discovered yesterday, didn't we darling, that the thing one must do is go in the Orange Street entrance, because you arrive among just the right sort of pictures to warm you up. Instead of being suddenly confronted with these ghastly old masterpieces, there are some very nice Dutch portraits, charming." He beams at the memory and distributes a packet of McVitie's half-coated digestives.

"One must have the dark chocolate, the milk ones are not the same. Is the coffee all right?"

I abandon my list of prepared questions and ask Bayley about the trilogy he's been writing since he retired. "Oh it's rather frivolous," he says dismissively. "I'm not a natural novelist like Iris. The third one, *George's Lair*, has just come out, but it can't be described as making a big splash."

"Oh it's jolly good," protests Iris loyally. "It's absolutely good!"

"It's quiet, narcissistic entertainment for me," he explains hurriedly. "I suppose I might have taken to woolwork!"

I wonder what they make of the current vogue, where just about everyone seems to be writing a novel? "It's partly the new feminists," says Bayley, brandishing his biscuit, "who are, quite rightly, wanting to find out who they are — a faintly ridiculous phrase I know, but there's some truth to it. I had a pupil who said 'I've written a novel to find out who I really am.'"

Dame Iris laughs at this and he continues: "Writing means you do catch an insight into your limitations, but [nodding at Iris] I don't think you bother about who you are at all darling. In fact you once said to me you didn't think you had much of an identity!"

"Well yes," she nods. "At present..."

"Your identity goes into your work."

"Writing came immediately to me," says Iris suddenly. "I had a wonderful education. I went to excellent schools [Badminton] where

they knew what was possible. And as time went on, I knew with passion when I finished a novel that I wanted to do the next one."

Then she stops and remarks clearly: "I am in a place from which I am trying to get out."

We all pause, nonplussed, until Bayley eventually breaks the silence by asking me if I have written a novel. I confess gloomily that I haven't.

"It's well worth trying," he says encouragingly.

"Try and find the time," says Iris. "Do, Do."

"Henry James found it solitary, but then he would wouldn't he?" Bayley giggles. "He thought you had to make a choice between living and writing. But I'm often struck by how Iris isn't the least bothered about whether she should live or write. And you never seem to mind giving it up for a bit. You did that book on philosophy. I sometimes quite resent that book, because it interrupted the novels."

"Oh I'm at peace with that," says Iris dismissively. "I don't know whether I should write another non-fiction book." She looks at me kindly. "I'm afraid you've arrived in a low situation."

"This is American-style coffee," says Bayley suddenly. "They make it weak over there so they can drink it all the time."

"I don't feel we're getting anywhere," says Iris.

We wander out to the garden, an uproarious spread of wild mint, goldenrod, Michaelmas daisies and some old cut flowers, still in their vases. "I was very lucky," says Iris as Bayley disappears into the kitchen. "I met a man I couldn't say 'no' to, and I couldn't be persuaded to throw him away."

He returns with a flat cap on which he insists on wearing "for without it, I look like Flumpy Dumpty". Despite Dame Iris's current problems, they seem utterly at ease with each other. "We've done all the things we want to, and now we just have a quiet life," says Bayley.

"Actually..." begins Iris. "Yes, you're more restless than me," concedes her husband. And I wonder if they missed having children? "Iris has never shown the slightest interest in being a mum," says her husband.

"And I'm not sure, but you could say you're more restless than me," concedes her husband. And I wonder if they missed having children? "Iris has never shown the slightest interest in being a mum," says her husband.

"As Iris poses obediently for photos, he beckons me over to the kitchen table, where there appear to be two of everything, two honey pots, two mustard pots, two jam pots and seven jars of coffee. "We've been to see doctors you know and they say the old brain's very crafty. It can come up against a block and for a bit things seem a bit strange, but then it finds its way around things again."

'I keep suggesting she should start in an ordinary way. You know, Tom and Dick were sitting in a pub'

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friend of Michaelangelo's brother. And when they come back in the future, it will be as an eagle or a dolphin, not a tortoise or a slug. In any event, what a great week for the Church of England, when it appears less hypocritical than the

I grew up believing Jesus was English and that he only ended up being crucified because he didn't like to say anything

Church of Rome and less mental than Scientology. The fact that the C of E shares with Rome a creed which espouses all manner of bizarre propositions, need not inhibit Anglicans from feeling quite pleased with themselves.

To add to the pleasure of the established church, the Welsh have been brought into line on the women priests issue. Catholicism does not accept women priests because Jesus only chose male disciples. I suggest Jesus's rationale was that women would have a harder time believing his rather extravagant claims, having met many men who think they're God's gift.

So Rome, whose priests can neither marry nor be women, looks pretty medieval by comparison with the C of E. Its rules on divorce and birth control don't help. And yet the Catholic Church is still not in the same state of decline as the C of E, probably because it still has more mysticism and more structure. It's a proper, old-time religion; Anglicanism isn't.

I grew up in the Church of England, and it seemed to involve believing Jesus was English and that he only ended up being crucified because he didn't like to say anything. It is, literally, the Church of

the establishment. Its blessing is given to adventures like the Falklands and the Gulf, and it is tied up with the monarchy. So it is hard to see its role as more progressive than that of the Catholic Church, especially since its basic tenets are the same. It is superior only in status — and because its bishops are better fathers.

It may be wrong to assume that all Christians are prone to feelings of superiority, but rest assured that most of the letters provoked by this article will conclude: "above all, we feel sorry for you and are praying for you." The rest will wish me eternal damnation.

In embracing a faith, we seek elevation. All faiths involve believing things that are highly implausible and trying to abide by impossible rules. There are inevitable failures, and those who suffer most are those seeking not only elevation but comfort. For all religions exist to be the opium of the people — except possibly the C of E, which is the paracetamol.

JEREMY HARDY

A wing, a prayer and a quick fix

MEMBERS of the Anglican hierarchy must have spent the week rubbing their hands with glee — pretending to be praying if anyone saw. For it has been a bad week for Catholicism, the Church of England's main rival in the market for Christians. Catholic priests now appear to be largely responsible for the growth of single parenthood in the last two decades.

The C of E can feel fairly confident that it will not face a similar crisis, as there has never been a problem of widespread homosexuality among the Anglican clergy. Moreover, marriage and children are actively encouraged, especially by Dr Runcie, who, for those clerics who are not heterosexual. The C of E therefore seems to be the more progressive denomination, as there are less things you're not allowed to do.

And yet, up until recently, not allowing people to do things was the strength of all great religions. Fear and abstinence were guiding

lights. A heavenly father who said, "You kids do what you like, but keep the noise down — I'm trying to watch evolution" just wouldn't have any clout. No doubt the rules were always broken, especially by those implementing them. As with civil government, it has never been considered important that those in charge obey their own rules, or even that their underlings expect them to; the rules simply have to be seen to be there. A bishop was like a Tory MP, he could be going out with the Household Cavalry, so long as he didn't make a song and dance about it.

But at some time, a spiritual need developed for religions which allow people to do more things, while still feeling religious. New religions, reviled as cults, were set up, many of them requiring only that believers put in a bit of chanting and a lot of their own money. The established religions got really annoyed.

The people pouring most derision on Scientology this week were

not the secular-minded but the Christians. Anxious parents told heart-rending stories about losing children to cults. Having been indoctrinated with Christianity all their life, the child then fell victim to "brain-washing techniques."

They no particular wish to defend Scientology. I know very little about it, apart from the advert, which appeals for "trust" in several languages: "trust" being a word which means charitable status. It's not hard to see its attraction. Scientologists don't believe in God, but believe we are all innately good people who have souls but need a bit of expensive therapy — all of which sounds great to a film star who's life is a little empty.

They also believe in re-incarnation, an idea which has always appealed to those with big egos. If anyone claims to have had a previous existence, it is always as someone famous, never a part-time cleaner at one of the pyramids or a

friend of Michaelangelo's brother. And when they come back in the future, it will be as an eagle or a dolphin, not a tortoise or a slug. In any event, what a great week for the Church of England, when it appears less hypocritical than the

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Emma and the fondly imagined age of innocence

WE WENT to see Emma the other day and I pondered how sex was not only unmentioned, but rarely even implied in Jane Austen. The sight of the gorgeous Gwyneth Paltrow, her Wonderbra heating, her astonishing neck, like Alice after scoffing the bottle marked "Drink Me", must have had Mr Knightley in conniptions. At the moment she accepts his proposal, you know exactly what he must be thinking, and it has nothing to do with companionable evenings reading by the fire.

THE course of these many years. So how about a spot of the other? IT'S PUZZLING that people are so upset about the new, silent champagne cork which the French have devised. Only vulgarists and racing drivers fire the cork like a rifle, spilling up to a pound's worth of champagne. A wise old timber once showed me how to open any bottle of sparkling wine. You turn the cork firmly and slowly so that it eases gently out of the bottle with the merest, the softest sibilant sigh, like, as he put it, "a duchess farting".

fore each punchline, then continued well into the next joke. Glowering stares and even straightforward abuse didn't stop the grinning, gibbering poltroon behind us. The comics themselves got annoyed and started to pick on him. This increased his pleasure and made him laugh louder.

Two teachers wrote that pupils of theirs had excused a sibling's absence by saying, 'He's well ill, Miss'

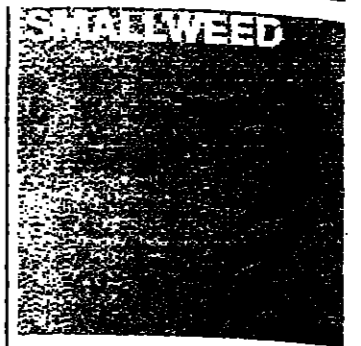
Finally Harry Hill demanded to know his name. Suffused with pride the maniac stood up and shouted "Simon!" No doubt he was rewarded with some crushing one-liner. But I did not hear it. I was covering in a fetal position, horribly ashamed of that name.

WHATEVER the Vatican may say now, it seems pretty clear that, like meat on Friday, married

priests are on their way. Perhaps this is unsurprising, as more and more sex has come to resemble a religion. At a time when few people believe in their own long journey through this vale of tears. Almost every magazine (and no doubt soon Popular Caravanning) contains earnest articles about how to worship at this shrine. Like the devotional literature young Victorians were supposed to read, these pieces ("Seventeen Ways to drive your man wild", "What she really wants in bed - how to be her greatest-ever lover") offer idealised versions of the Sexual Life. Instead of being told to model ourselves on Saints Theresa or Sebastian, we follow that couple in The Lovers' Guide who, thanks to the perfection of their teachings about The Carnal Path, always achieve the Big O.

THANKS for your letters about changing phrases, especially on the use of "well" to intensify adjectives, as in "well happy". Two teachers wrote separately to say that pupils of theirs had excused a sibling's absence by saying, "He's well ill, Miss".

CURIOUS social events at the coming Labour Party conference. The Ramblers' Association is holding an all-day ramble, on normally forbidden land owned by the Duke of Westminster, and wants MPs to join. The notion that they will leave what promises to be the bloodiest conference in years to go for a walk even in the Forest of Bowland, is so ridiculous it's rather sweet. Then on the Thursday, Mrs Ann Widdowcombe (a recent Catholic convert, and Smallweed's outside tip, by the way to manage Manchester City) is being maligned for downplaying this week's revelations. But that is due to her broad historical sweep. No doubt she's been travelling back to Pope Damasus I in 366-369, whose taste for the company of wealthy ladies earned him the nickname "The Matron's Ear-Tickler".



CELIBACY, as some have learned to their cost this week, is a difficult concept. As the Guardian pointed out at the start, though others still haven't noticed, it simply means not being married. It doesn't mean abstaining from sex. Thus among the words it has spawned, celibatary means favouring celibacy, and a celibatist is a professed supporter of celibacy. On this basis, as I understand it, Bishop Roddy, for all his adventures, deserves to be classed as a celibate celibatary. Celibast. What he isn't is chaste.

SEE THE government minister Anne Widdowcombe (a recent Catholic convert, and Smallweed's outside tip, by the way to manage Manchester City) is being maligned for downplaying this week's revelations. But that is due to her broad historical sweep. No doubt she's been travelling back to Pope Damasus I in 366-369, whose taste for the company of wealthy ladies earned him the nickname "The Matron's Ear-Tickler".

Some of his successors, I fear, did more than tickle ears. Some were openly married, like Felix III (483-492), who was buried alongside his wife and children. Boniface VI (938) had been twice un-frocked before he came to the Papacy, once for immorality, but we need not worry too much about him since he died of the gout after 15 days.

Far worse was John XII (955-964), imposed by his father Prince Alberic II of Rome when he was just 18. He was still in his early twenties when he suffered a stroke while in bed, it was widely asserted, with a married woman, and died soon after.

The sins of some 15th and 16th century popes were far too enormous for listing here. Pius II (1458-64) before his accession had fathered several children and written erotic books. Julius II (1503-13) was the father of three, and Paul III (1534-49) a father of four. The champion, perhaps, in very tight competition, was Alexander VI (1492-1503), the number of whose progeny is not precisely stated even in the Oxford Dictionary of Popes. But one of them was the subsequent Lucrezia Borgia (Smallweed's outside tip, by the way, to manage Manchester City).

An ecclesiastical correspondent writes: How typical of your column that you only find room for ecclesiastical news when some scandal rears its head! Have you nothing more salubrious? Smallweed weekly ripples: Very well then. What about a few lines from The Tablet? I have recently seen the following reported in its salutary pages.

A Dominican and a Jesuit have gone to a retreat. The Dominican asks its director: do you mind if I smoke while I'm praying? The director replies: certainly not. But the Jesuit asks: do you mind if I pray while I'm smoking? Of course not! says the director. (This is one in a series of Dominican/Jesuit jokes. The Tablet's series, not mine).

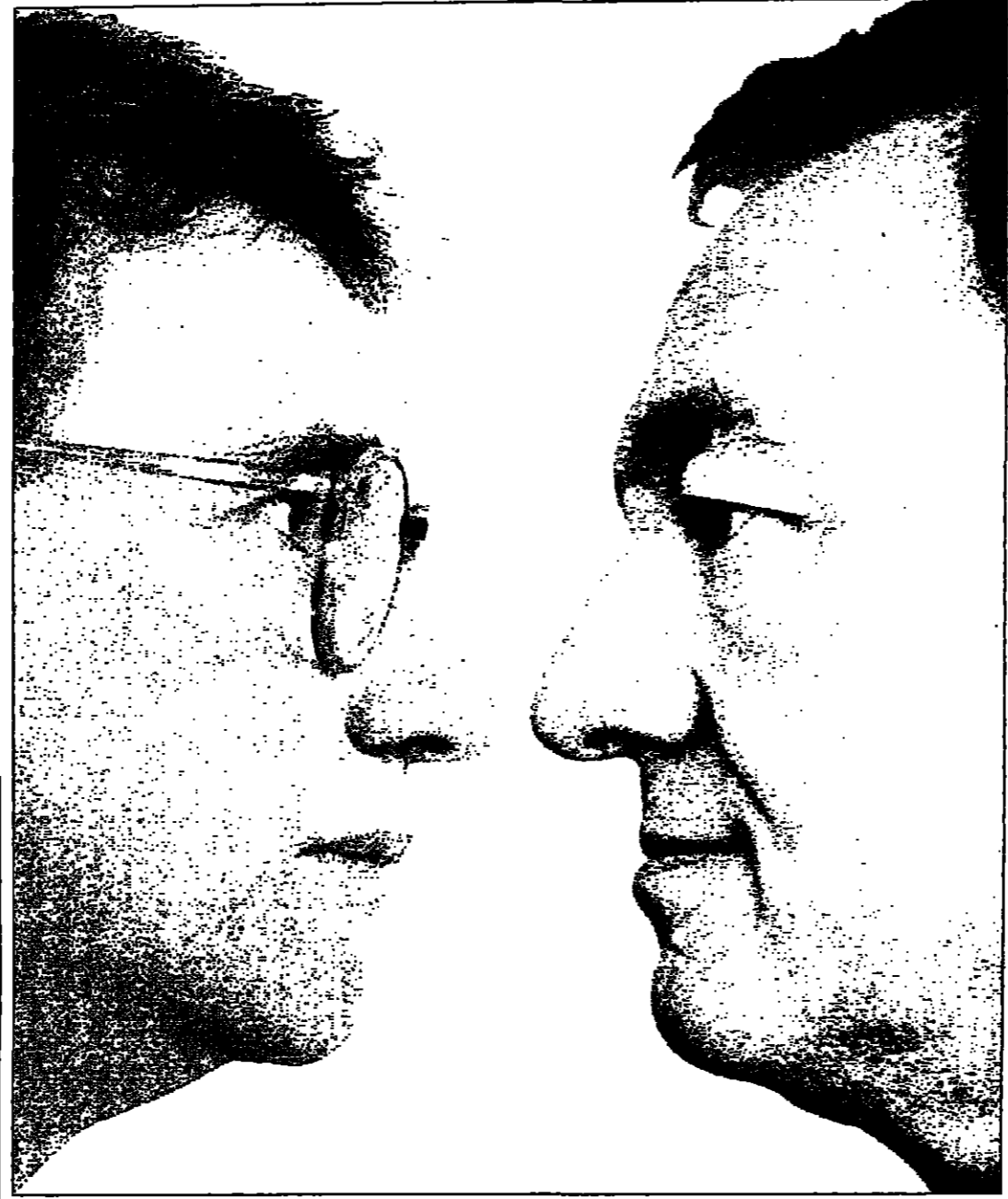
MEANWHILE there's the curious case of the outrage about the present Pope's visit to Paris, which some seem to find incompatible with the proudly-guarded secular and nationalist traditions of the state. I simply ask the trouble-makers this question: is it not the case that the President of France is automatically an honorary canon of St John de Latran in Rome, regardless of his personal beliefs? How can that be squared with your impertinent anti-clerical thunderings? An ecclesiastical correspondent writes: That's a bit better.

LIKE my children to have a sense of security - novelist and Sunday Times columnist A G Gill, in an interview for the Relative Values series in that newspaper. "I'm a greater believer in positive divorce" - ditto, explaining why he ditched his second wife and family to go off with the actress Nicola Formby (Smallweed's outside tip by the way to manage Manchester City).

ALTHOUGH largely ignored by the British media, a remarkable match is taking place in Colombo. Among the Zimbabwe XI are two players called Flower, two players called Strang, and two called Whittall. I challenge the Association of Cricket Statisticians to tell me when this has happened before. And just in case they can do so, I throw in this further challenge. All this has occurred in a match where Sri Lanka are fielding W P J C Vaas (Smallweed's outside tip, by the way, to manage Manchester City). Five initials; even more than the old Essex and England player J W H T Douglas. Name me a previous test match in which both these exceptional features have coincided. Any others? I thought not.

Whose line is it anyway?

Has the Labour leadership become a Stalinist clique? In an exchange of faxes, Ken Livingstone MP calls for power to the people, while Brian Wilson MP says winning the election must come first



Best of comrades... Brian Wilson, left, and Ken Livingstone

Dear Brian,

I HAVE always believed that it is better to judge politicians by their deeds rather than their words. All the recent talk of democracy in the Labour Party leads me to recall those eastern European regimes that constantly protested their democracy while imprisoning dissidents: true democrats do not have to keep declaring their intentions. The latest stage in the emasculatation of the Labour Party is the proposal for a referendum on Labour's manifesto. The leaders' policy advisers have cobbled together a bland and imprecise statement of aspirations that they intend to push through the annual conference next month by relying on the loyalty of the trades unions' block vote so close to an election. The so-called modernisers' contempt for democracy and the party they now dominate is most clearly revealed in their decision to ban party members and unions from proposing or voting on any amendments to that manifesto. Opinion polls show that the pub-

Dear Ken,

lic is ready for a much more radical policy than Labour is proposing. Yet from Kinnock to Blair, their so-called reforms have never been about making Labour acceptable to ordinary voters; their real purpose has been to make Labour acceptable to unaccountable powers that be both in Britain and internationally. Thus, while Labour's leaders reduce the party's members to mere spectators, Tony Blair flies to Washington to reassure Clinton that a Labour government would not challenge US imperialism. While Gordon Brown warns millions of ordinary people they cannot expect Labour to continue to pay child benefit for the over-16s, Blair flies to Australia to reassure Rupert Murdoch we shall not be increasing his taxes. The plain truth is that all the so-called reform of the Kinnock/Blair years has been about trying to prevent ordinary people from revealing the Labour Party as a vehicle to defend themselves against the interests of organised capital. Yours sincerely, Ken Livingstone, MP for Brent East

Dear Ken,

AS YOU so rightly say, democracy is a highly subjective word. You confirm this by adhering with undiminished affection to an era when Labour conferences were dominated by block votes and the general election manifesto was cobbled together at dead of night after the date had been fixed. What we now have may not satisfy the most demanding definitions of pure democracy but it's certainly a hell of a lot closer than what we used to have. There is nothing in the Road to the Manifesto which is not drawn from policies approved by conference. Every member of the party has had the opportunity to contribute to both the debate and then the synthesis. As a public entertainment for our opponents, a conference devoted to debating endless amendments would doubtless be a triumph. As a contribution to the return of a Labour government it would be rather less helpful. And who, I wonder, would vote on all these amendments once they had been conferred upon. You already dismiss the National Conference because it is tarnished by the "loyalty" dirty word, that of trade unions. So do you recommend another round of constituency meetings and perhaps then another conference, as the election looms?

Dear Brian,

ALTHOUGH you complain about the imperfect way in which the Labour conference operated in the past in drawing up our manifesto, it was certainly more open to influence by party members than the present position. Our problem in those days was that Labour leaders would often tend to make last-minute changes at the start of the election. Now Labour's leader nobles the process before the Conference gets to it. The reason you are not prepared to trust the membership with any real power to amend the Leader's document is that you fear they might radicalise it. Your commitment to freeze public spending in real terms would be overwhelmingly deleted if we were allowed to vote on it. There would undoubtedly be commitments added to defend the welfare state and to work for the return of full employment. You point out that we have lost the last four elections but you don't seem to be clear about why that is the case. Support for the Labour party never fell below 40 per cent in the post-war period. It was only after the Wilson government of the 1960s tried to introduce anti-union laws, and imposed cuts in public spending and a pernicious wage freeze that we saw

Labour's support halved. Labour wins when it is confident, radical and inspiring to the millions of people who look to us to improve the quality of their lives. If you look at the last election result, you will see that Labour received more votes from the middle classes but less from the working classes than ever before. I wonder whether you have learned the lesson of why we let the 1992 election slip through our fingers. Yours sincerely, Ken

Dear Ken,

WHILE I don't claim any monopoly of wisdom about why we have lost four elections, I feel reasonably sure that 1993 didn't give us our worst result since 1981 because the manifesto wasn't left-wing enough! I remember after that election, Tony Benn writing to the Guardian to say what a triumph it had really been because 8 million people had voted for a truly socialist agenda. Unfortunately, he omitted to mention that 13 million had voted for the Tories. Anyway, this is all backward-looking stuff. We have a draft manifesto which makes radical commitments on a national minimum wage, restoration of the right to union recognition, cutting class sizes, abolishing hereditary voting rights and a great deal else. Surely we are under some obligation to point out that a higher proportion of average incomes now goes on tax than in 1979? That should provide us with quite a lot of leeway to re-order priorities. It's easy always to call for more public expenditure based on higher taxation. But that evades the need to consider how we could

Advertisement for The Dogs' Home Battersea MasterCard. It costs you nothing. To a dog it could mean everything. Includes details of the card's benefits and contact information.

Doonesbury comic strip by Garry Trudeau. Panels show characters discussing budget cuts and political maneuvering. Includes a signature 'Garry Trudeau'.

Application form for The Dogs' Home Battersea MasterCard, including fields for name, address, postcode, and telephone.

Large vertical advertisement on the right edge of the page, partially cut off, featuring the words 'Eat drink while you can' and 'Who e'.

Eat, drink, while you can

Richard Thomas detects a healthy dose of cynicism as we splash out again, 1980s style

FRIDAY lunchtime in the heart of the City and the derivatives trader is getting wistful. "In the old days, of course, there would have been lines of St John's Ambulance people outside this wine-bar at the end of the lunchtime drinking session, waiting to scrape us off the floor."

"Still," he admits between sips of champagne, "things could be worse." Indeed the throng of pin-stripes around him reckon things are looking decidedly brighter than just a few months ago.

Retro-hints of the late eighties boom are sprouting everywhere: champagne sales are up by 30 per cent this year, garages are going for £40,000 in Chelsea, the stock exchange is gearing up for a massive 10th birthday party of Big Bang next week, headhunters are stalking the boardroom again and Tesco is selling kangaroo steak.

The high street is busier than at any time for the last seven years, and consumer confidence is at the highest level since 1988, the year that Nigel Lawson put his potent tax-cut fuel on the economic furnace.

Conspicuous consumption has returned with a vengeance. Chris Drury, manager of upmarket estate agent, Century 21, based in London's Kensington, says the mood of the late eighties property boom is definitely back. "Money

is cheap, prices are going up and the market is moving," he says.

Gazumping is becoming common again. Drury has just seen one property fought over by eight potential purchasers. "The energy and the vigour are there again." He has just sold a small flat to a buyer from the Far East for £300,000.

Eating out is also back in fashion, cigars are in vogue with stylish men and women. Even the Government says booze is good for us.

It is all a far cry from the first half of this decade, heralded as the caring nineties when we would all eat well, exercise more, build family nests and fret about the environment. British Gas's launch last week of a new credit card, with a goldfish logo — said to symbolise this softer, more sedate period — shows how out of touch the firm is with current trends.

Alan Lewis, editor-in-chief of *Eat Soup*, a new magazine aimed at people "who'd rather spend £100 on a meal from Marco Pierre White than on a lawnmower," says the early nineties experiment in asceticism was doomed to failure. "We tried it for a couple of years, and decided it was bloody boring," he says. "People aren't embarrassed to spend their money now. We're all a lot more relaxed."

Lewis reckons that *Eat Soup*, whose core belief is that too much of a good thing is wonderful, could soon overtake the 100,000 copies of the BBC Vegetarian magazine. It's a clear sign of the times. Down on Sloane Street, a favourite barometer of consumption trends, the fashion outlet Nicole Farhi, has sensed the shift too. Assistant manager Lisa Bardell says: "People are spending again, and on the pricier end of the range. Young girls supported by their parents, wives funded by rich husbands, career women — they are all splashing out on clothes."

The new hedonism extends to women taking their clothes off, too. The explosion of men's magazines with women in varying degrees of undress is a signal that the political correctness of a few years ago is disappearing along with negative equity.

A newly-opened restaurant in the West End, Sarastro, is boldly



Conspicuous consumption... even the Government says booze is good for us. PHOTOGRAPH: KIPPA MATTHEWS

Spend, spend, spend



"Our sales have been up for the last two years. It's a buyer's market. Our prices range from about £22,000 for a lined garden pool in the suburbs to about

£150,000 for an indoor pool in, say, Mayfair."
Tony Linc, the London Swimming Pool Company Limited

"Business is up 30 per cent in both private and business sectors. There's been a steady increase in business marking a climb out of recession — the future is looking promising."
Bernard de Sails, Gastronomie's, private caterers

"Our sales are steady and very good, not booming like the eighties, but very stable. At the end of the eighties people started drinking Per-



rier and stopped smoking. But now the cigars are coming back out. Our made-to-measure shirts start at £100 each."
Simon Hobb, Turnbull & Asser bespoke tailors

"Yes sales are climbing nicely. The feelgood factor is creeping back cautiously. Beluga Caviar is £1,700 a kilo."
Suzie Boeckmann, The Caviar House

deked out like a Roman-Egyptian-Victorian beach. Diners sit with a reclining nude behind them, and a mummy with enormous and curved phallus to the side, presumably in an attempt to distract them from the food, which is horrible.

But the City boys certainly welcome the new openness. They spend their lunchtimes entertaining ordinary reserved clients in strip bars and their evenings in places like Bar Etrusca — dubbed Bar Orgasm, or by the less sophisticated, Bar Spunk (for reasons too sordid to record).

"All that politically correct nonsense has gone, thank God," says one reveller. "It's party time again." Even though the glass-throwing days of the 1980s are gone, the rowdiness index is creeping up, and the women aren't about to be left out. Their answer to the racks of laddish mens magazines is *Mix*, which shouts about: "Life. Enjoying it, grabbing it by the throat, lusting after it."

This is the crucial difference between 1986 and 1988: Then, the collective splurge was driven by economics, now the rationale is one of partying in the face of adversity.

In the late 1980s, wages were soaring, unemployment was tumbling, house prices were growing by 20 per cent a year, and borrowing was at an all-time high. Today, the growth of pay packets is a measly 3.75 per cent a year and the dole queue is shrinking painfully slowly. The biggest difference is the absence of inflation this economic upturn is the first since the 1920s, when growth has not been accompanied by rising prices.

Jonathan Loynes, an economist at City brokers HSBC Markets, says there are almost no economic parallels with the last recovery. "That was a real boom," he says. "This time we are seeing a boom-let at the most."

But Loynes says there's a danger that the Government will miss the headline images of a yuppie renaissance as a rerun of the late 1980s, and impose an unnecessary period of austerity. Because the wounds of the 1980s boom-and-bust are still fresh, a workaday economic upturn could be dressed up as another credit-fueled period of madness. Because the party got out of hand last time, they might close this one down before it gets going.

Fortunately it is unlikely to happen soon. Although the Bank of England would love to call a halt, the Treasury will not put the brakes on by raising the cost of borrowing or taxes. The Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, has his eyes on the impending election.

"Putting up interest rates would be political suicide," says Loynes. "We are just not in the same boat as last time around."

Ten years ago, the champagne-swillers were celebrating the fact that things could only get better: now they are getting the fizz in while they can, because things can only get worse. In the 1980s, the cigar-smoking, red-meat eating, nude-ogling is more a realisation that such prosperity is a pipe-dream.

Geoff Mulgan, head of the independent think-tank Demos, says there is a new attitude to excess. "From 40-year-old women going to the Chippendales to 15-year-old girls taking 'E', the acceptability of hedonism has grown."

He says the brief detour into self-denial in the first part of the 1980s belied a longer-term trend towards making consumption as conspicuous as possible. "The 1980s puritanism was clearly not deeply based. As soon as we have any money, we start throwing it around again."

Focus groups of young people show that, for the first time ever,

they expect to have a lower quality of life than their parents, and are not banking on a pension or NHS care in their old age. But instead of deciding to squirrel cash away to guard against these eventualities, we are blowing it instead.

"It is a completely irrational, though entirely human, reaction," says Mulgan. In the 1960s, we thought we were in control and it went horribly wrong. Today we assume in advance that everything will go horribly wrong; and so down our sorrows in advance. We are becoming a more fatalistic society."

So the only escape is in the hands of the Gods, or Camelot — the success of the national lottery, he says, is a stark symptom of the fatalistic nineties. Even the over-reported rise in job insecurity feeds into the current mood. For each person who reacts to the daily threat of a P45 by taking out insurance policies, saving their pennies and keeping their noses clean, there is at least one who blows the whole of their pay-cheque (and then a bit on alcohol, cigarettes and drugs).

Two of the City liquid-lunchers are on short-term contracts in a

Ten years ago, the champagne-swillers were celebrating the fact that things could only get better: now they are getting the fizz in while they can

bucket-shop share dealer, trading low-value stocks. They are busy getting as drunk as possible before going back to their current workplace. They are so blasé about their jobs that they urge the printing of their hated boss's name in the paper. Mr Kent, apparently.

But there are at least some people holding out against the new devil-may-care culture, people who are defining themselves in other ways than the amount of champagne quaffed or type of cars driven. The US trend towards "down-shifting" — swapping a well-paid but shallow job for a poorer but more fulfilling life — has spread across the Atlantic.

So society is becoming fragmented into two parts: in the first camp, the hedonists, in the second, the recyclers, and the poor. This is certainly true of the property upturn, which the big lenders reckon will push up prices by 5 per cent this year and 8 per cent in 1987.

In the heady days under Margaret Thatcher, wardrobe-sized flats on busy roads were being snapped up. As Drury says: "Back then people were buying absolutely anything. Today's boom is a bit more sophisticated — the good stuff at the top and middle-layers are going fast, but the lower end is still pretty quiet. And the bad buys are simply being ignored."

This is another departure from the last boom, when almost everybody had their party hats on and everyone wanted a piece of the action. Growing wage inequality is part of the story: directors salaries are growing four times as fast as everyone else's.

Even in the City wine bar the gulf is recognised. Pouring himself another glass of bubbly, the nostalgic trader agrees that life is fundamentally unfair. "If I have a good year, I can wipe out any negative equity or debt. But if you're a teacher, you can have the best year of your life and it doesn't make a jot of difference, does it?"

Who else was out to get Amin?

In the week that we learned of Harold Wilson's secret plan to assassinate Idi Amin, Giles Foden reveals the lucky breaks that kept the Ugandan dictator alive



The former President for Life as seen by Gibbard

IN THE middle of 1976, President Amin was due to attend a police review. By that time the murderous excesses of his reign were well known internationally and his safety in public was considered uncertain. Consequently, he had nervously changed the venue of the review four times, eventually settling on Nsambya Police Recreation Ground. The date was June 10.

He sat in the covered stand, a figure as inflated as his official title: President For Life Field Marshal Al Hadj Dr Idi Amin Dada, VC, DSO, MC, Lord of All the Beasts of the Earth and Fishes of the Sea, Last King of Scotland, Conqueror of the British Empire in Africa in General and Uganda in Particular. On these occasions, he usually wore a full complement of medals, including a special Victoria Cross made up by the London Jewellers, Spinks, with his own image replacing the British Lion.

When the review was over, Amin and the various ministers and army officers retired to a reception nearby. But after only three-quarters of an hour, perhaps still nervous, he set off for State House at Entebbe on the shores of Lake Victoria, a few miles from the capital of Uganda, Kampala. The sun was going down as the dignitaries, watched by the crowds, made their way to their army jeeps and Mercedes Benz limousines, usually in dark glasses. He took the wheel of the open jeep, telling his driver to move over, and swung towards the gates where more crowds were in place to cheer him.

As Amin turned out on to the main road, there were two explosions in quick succession. There was smoke and a faint rain of debris. Then two shots rang out. One of the dignitaries, according to Henry Kyemba, minister of health

at the time, said, "They have got him".

The first grenade, it later emerged, had exploded where Amin would have been sitting, had he not taken the driver's seat. It shredded one of the front tyres and — an X-ray later showed — forced an inch-long, needle-like splinter into the driver's brain.

The moment after the blasts was pandemonium. Amin, opening his briefcase, took out a grenade himself, "ready to pull out the pin with his teeth and toss it over his shoulder", as Kyemba recalls. Then he sped off to take the driver to hospital.

The driver died. Amin survived. On his orders, troops blooded Kampala. Citizens were killed and beaten. No one ever found the true culprits.

Harold Wilson, it now appears, was willing if not able to assassinate Amin. The British Prime Minister had decided that enough was enough, at a time when Amin's thugs were said to be killing 1,000 people a day. In a television documentary to be screened tomorrow (BBC2, 8.10pm) his press secretary Joe Haines reveals how Wilson ordered the assassination of Amin in 1974-75. He called Haines into his office and said, "We are going to have to kill Idi Amin. How do we set about doing this?" — only to be told by the Foreign Office that they were "very much against it" and didn't have field operatives capable of such activities.

Wilson resigned on March 16 1976, by which time an assassination plan might well have been in place, had he succeeded in organising one. Already, in early 1975, a car in Amin's entourage had been forced off the road in a botched attempt on his life: it was the wrong car, and Amin was unhurt. The irony was that it was the British who had established Amin

in the first place, tipping the wink at his ousting of Milton Obote in 1971. Former CIA agents report that Britain and the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad actually planned the coup with Amin, though this is unproven.

The British later began to realise their error. In one way or another, they had to take steps against this Frankenstein they had created, having provided the former sergeant in the colonial King's African Rifles with vast amounts of military aid and training during the first half of his brutal tenure, which lasted until 1979 and claimed up to half a million lives.

But they were slow about it. Even after Amin threw out the British High Commissioner, Richard Slater, following British protests about the expulsion of the Ugandan Asians in 1972, diplomatic relations were maintained, right up to the Israeli "Raid on Entebbe" in July 1976.

Other governments also saw in Amin a useful foreign policy tool. The deadly nexus of 1970s Cold War and Arab-Israeli conflict had turned the beautiful country of Uganda into a strategic counter in world power-play.

WHAT worried the British was that not long before Amin's coup Obote had announced a "Common Man's Charter", aligning himself with the pro-Soviet or Maoist Frontline states of Tanzania, Zambia and Mozambique. Apart from Kenya, it seemed that the British would now have few friends in Central Africa. Why not ally instead on trusty old Amin, whom in the old colonial days British soldiers had hit on the head (some say with hammers) before army rugby games "to get him

Amin, though, turned out to be a murderous buffoon whom none of them could control. This was a man whose security staff used sledgehammers to smash the skulls of prisoners, not to mention Amin's obsession with witchcraft. His bizarre fictional world turned *realpolitik* into a Punch and Judy show — what hope then of sensible policy?

The comedy and the corpses (and with Amin these are inextricably, grotesquely linked) would have indeed been limited had Wilson had his way and there been a successful assassination attempt. As it was, Amin's reign of terror continued until he was deposed by a Tanzanian invasion in 1979.

When asked if he dreamed that people were trying to kill him, he said: "I dreamed, but it was impossible. They couldn't do it. Because I know, I dreamed that, I know that exactly: when, how and what time I am going to die. This I know. And which year and which date. All this I know already and it is a secret... I have said this clear... And I know exactly that, who will be making something against me. Very soon, I can notice him straight and he can get punishment from God straight. Because I work only according to the God's instructions."

Today, he is a devout Muslim. He has slimmed down and dropped his habit of drinking brandy with handfuls of aspirins. He has only one wife and swims daily from his coastal villa in Saudi Arabia.

Apart from cutting off his phone because the bill was too large, the gracious government there seems happy to be his host. After all, rather than that other former British protégé, Saddam Hussein.

Giles Foden's novel about Idi Amin, *The Last King of Scotland*, will be published by Faber and Faber

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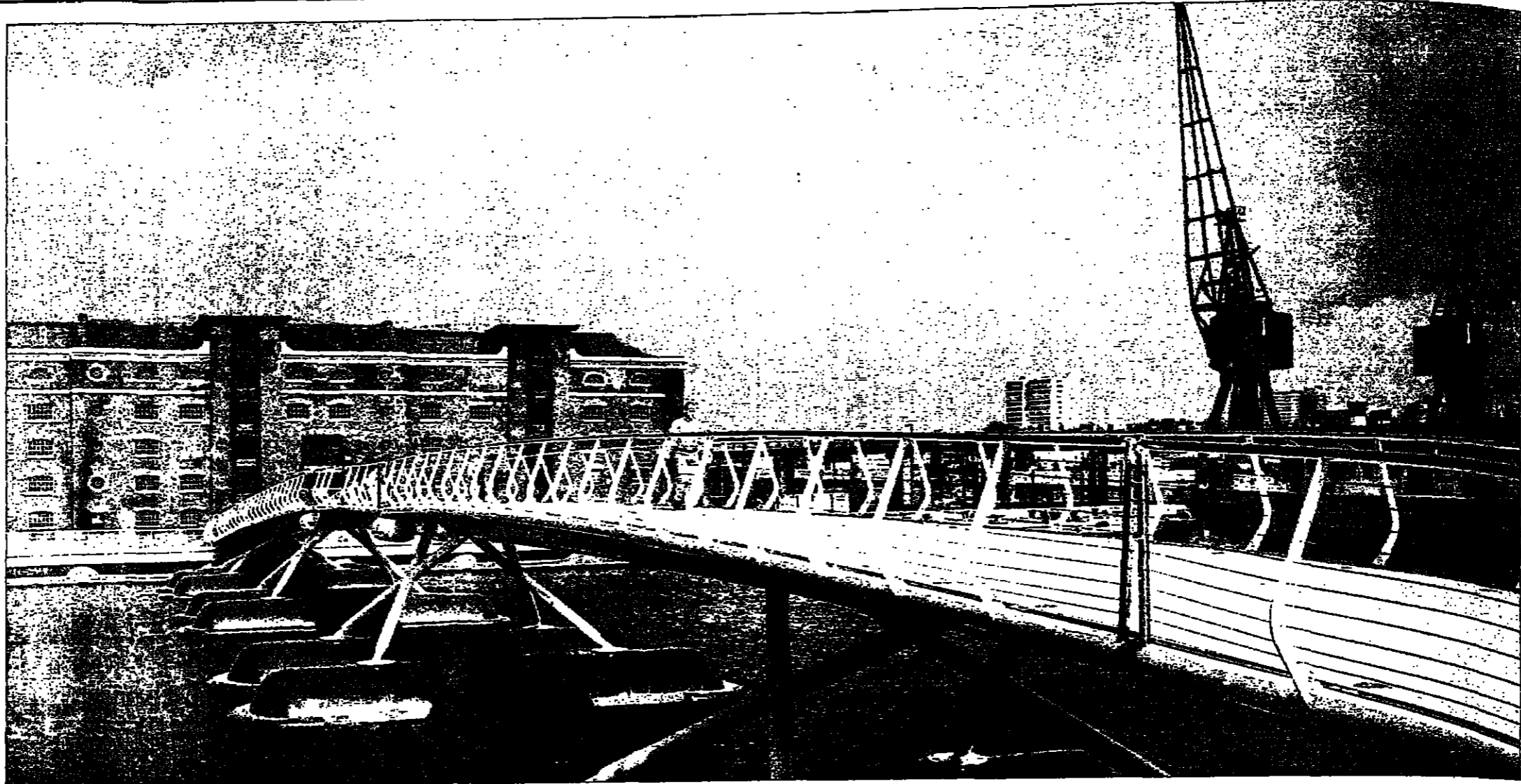
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arts



The Royal Academy's doing it, Norman Foster's doing it, even John Gummer is showing interest. **Deyan Sudjic** accounts for an outbreak of...

Bridge mania

DESPITE Norman Foster's headline-hogging attempt to push the essentially egotistical architecture of the sky-scraper to centre stage of the design agenda of the 90s, the authentic motif of our times may yet turn out to be the humble bridge.

The bridge is a powerful symbol of positive intentions; shining good deed in a wicked world. It's the way that countries meet each other on equal terms, as in the case of Foster's own recent commission to design a bridge linking France with Spain. And it brings areas within cities together too.

Not since the 18th century has London seen such a feverish rush to throw bridges across the Thames. For the first time since the completion of Waterloo Bridge half a century ago, there is a real chance that central London will see the building of a rash of new river crossings. They are crossings that promise to alter not just how central London looks, but how it works. Combine all the proposed new bridges with the revitalisation of Southwark and the Bermondsey that is already well under way, and the 2000-year-old inferiority complex of the South Bank could finally evaporate.

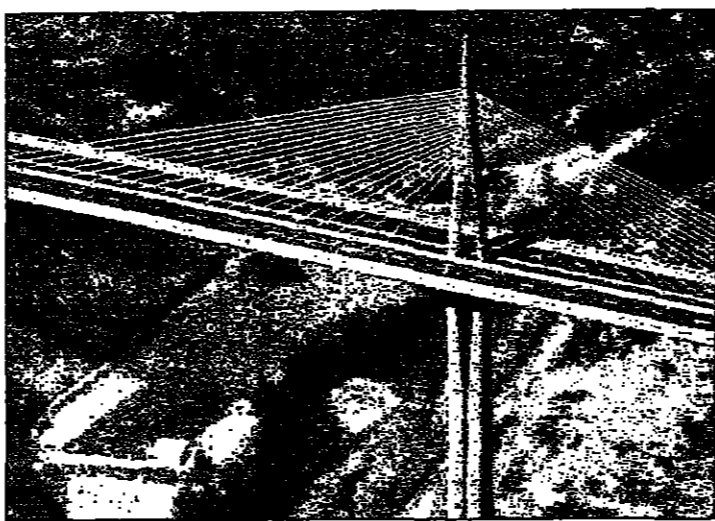
Some of these bridges have as much to do with symbolism as with providing a practical response to functional needs. It is as if the architectural profession is taking the allegedly caring shaggy nineties seriously and using the bridge as a chance to make a conspicuous amends for the excesses of the rip-roaring eighties. Office block is virtually a term of abuse, but nobody objects to the idea of a new bridge. It's like motherhood and apple pie. And for the architect, designing a bridge has the additional advantage that, though it is seen as just as socially worthy as building an old people's home, there is no need for him or

her to curb the wilder flights of creative exhibitionism.

Astonishingly, even John Gummer has embraced the idea of recreating Old London Bridge in a contemporary form. He wants to build an inhabited bridge, linking the National Theatre with the Temple Garden, just south of the Aldwych. More immediately practical than Gummer's dream is the plan for a new pedestrian crossing at Hungerford Bridge. There is also a competition underway to design a high-profile footbridge to link the Tate Gallery's Museum of Modern Art at Bankside with St Pauls. And Will Alsop, working with the artist Bruce McLean and the engineer Tony Hunt, has a startling scheme to build a replacement for the ICA on a sensational steel and glass bridge that would cascade across the river at Blackfriars, in effect creating a new public space that is neither north nor south of the river.

This outbreak of bridge mania comes to a peak next week when the Royal Academy opens its spectacular exhibition on the history of the inhabited bridge, which will show many of these proposals. The Academy has created a river which runs through its classical rooms. At one end is a handsome scale model of Old London Bridge — described by one contemporary as "adorned with sumptuous buildings and stately beautiful houses inhabited by wealthy citizens, comparable in itself to a little city". At the other are seven designs which attempt to recreate the ancient form, commissioned by the Royal Academy on Gummer's behalf.

Alongside these designs, the Academy's exhibition, beautifully designed by Nigel Coates, shows great bridges both built and unbuilt, from the Ponte Vecchio in Florence with its corridors linking the Pitti Palace with the Uffizi, to the single span Rialto Bridge in Venice, an engineering triumph of its time.



From top... Future Systems' design at Wren's Landing, Canary Wharf; Norman Foster's plan for a bridge to link France and Spain; and Ian Ritchie's entry for Thames Water's habitable bridge competition, which will be shown in the Royal Academy's Living Bridges exhibition

More recently the bridge has been a focus for regular outbursts of visionary speculation, from William Holden's fanciful proposal to replace Tower Bridge with a Futurist-looking Crystal Bridge, to Meimikov's Constructivist suggestion to span the Seine with a 1,000-car garage.

While the Academy is showing a range of bridges that may or may not be built, at Canary Wharf a newly opened pontoon structure demonstrates the positive effect a bridge can have. Designed by Future Systems, the bridge is a convincing demonstration of new life in this once blighted development, linking its central area to previously isolated warehouses.

It's not hard to see why bridges get a better press than skyscrapers. The race to build high comes across as a somewhat simple-minded quest for a virility symbol. The bridge, on the other hand — when it is not saddled with egregious toll charges — can be presented as an optimistic, even altruistic gesture. To build a bridge is the most constructive of metaphors. In practice the bridge can indeed have the ability to tie cities together. It offers a chance to see cities from a different perspective. It creates public space of a unique kind, a viewing point, as well as a route, the tangible evidence of a link that needs to be emotional as well as physical. It provides a direct relationship with water. Indeed, the bridge is one of the few building types whose charms the 20th century has not managed to completely extinguish.

The surprise is that bridge building — certainly in the urban context — has had such a low profile in Britain since the completion of the giant suspension structures across the Forth, the Severn and the Humber that characterised the sixties and seventies. Perhaps the vacuum was something to do with cut-backs in public investment. But it was also a reflection of a shift in attitudes among the people who actually design bridges. The great 19th century engineers always saw the bridge as a chance to show off their skills. Brunel and Eiffel devised structures which demonstrate clearly just how much of an achievement it is to span wide stretches of water. They looked for slenderness, and the minimum of material. And they produced dynamic, soaring bridges that still stand as a triumphant assertion of the ability of their designers to rise to the challenge of the landscape. In the seventies and eighties, the engineers hung up their top hats and their cigars and the

rules of the game were changed. Instead of showing with muscular laudness every stress and strain involved in carrying a load across a void, arches atrophied into anorexic, flat beams. The successful bridge came to be seen as the one with the least demonstrative structure. Engineers went out of their way to make bridges that give the impression that nothing special is going on.

The great engineers celebrated the act of crossing, their successors denied that process — just as railway stations once celebrated the act of arrival and departure, while the contemporary airport is little more than a shopping centre and a self-contained lot for jumbos.

The extent to which the world has rediscovered the older meaning of the bridge owes a great deal to the work of the Spanish engineer and architect Santiago Calatrava in Barcelona and Seville in the run up to the Olympics and Expo of 1992. Calatrava went back to the first principles of bridge design, devising new ways of giving them the strength and stability they need with the minimum of material. Though based on mathematical principles and analysis, Calatrava's bridges have the organic look of naturally occurring forms — they suggest animal skeletons, or plant structures. And they make it clear that engineering can be an emotional and romantic process, as well as a strictly pragmatic one.

A Calatrava bridge has become a trophy for ambitious cities eager to put themselves on the international map — both Manchester and Glasgow have worked with him. But Calatrava has also opened the way for others. Future System's new floating pontoon bridge is an acknowledgment that Canary Wharf is no longer just an artificial enclave of urbanity sealed against the East End in a self-contained bubble of its own atmosphere. Bit by bit, Canary Wharf is becoming a real place, one that it is possible to explore in a personal way. The bridge demonstrates that this is now a slice of authentic city, not just a backdrop for corporate headquarters. In the shadow of Skidmore Owings and Merrill's improbable evocation of a 1900 Chicago skyscraper it stands — in acid green tubular steel. The address, a touch optimistically, is Wren's Landing. But there is something about the delicacy of this bridge that does indeed remind you Wren was a mathematician, and not mean hand at designing bridges himself. Living Bridges runs from Sept 26 to Dec 18 at the Royal Academy, London.

SHOOTING STARS



RISING: SUE TILLEY

Up... DHSS employee Sue Tilley is suggested to subject-hungry painter Lucien Freud by her friend, the performance artist and artist's model Leigh Bowery. Freud, in a flurry of brushstrokes, produces *Benefit Supervisor Resting* — a corpulent nude kipping on a cosy couch.

Up... A year later, in 1994, Freud exhibits his newest works among the old masters at the Dutch Picture Gallery. "Big Sue" hangs between Rubens' *Venus, Mars and Cupid* and Lely's *Nymphs By A Fountain*, and grabs more attention than those fading favourites combined.

Away... The zenith of any model's ambition is attained. Sue the supervisor appears — in all three of the artist's studios of her — in a glossy new compendium of Freud's work, to grace coffee-tables everywhere.



FALLING: FREDERICK FORSYTH

Going... Pens Day Of The Jackal in 35 days, and sets off on his thrilling journey to become one of the first film-rights millionaires. **Going...** Retires. Only joking. Farming doesn't pay school fees. Returns to the typewriter. No joy from planned remake of *Jackal* — he flogged the rights 23 years ago. **Gene...** His tenth novel, *Icon*, is parned in the press. He's dismissed by *Private Eye* as "The man who knows. But knowledge does not make novels". Announces his intention to retire again. He finds writing more soporific these days than counting sheep on his Hertfordshire estate.

The V&A's decision to introduce an admission charge will cost us all dear, says Julian Spalding

How to commit curatorial suicide

Provocations

IN 1985 I went to see Sir Roy Strong to try to persuade him not to introduce charges at the V&A. He was dismissive: "Welfare-state culture," he told me, "is a thing of the past." But at that point he only introduced a voluntary charge. Now, on October 1, full charges are to be introduced — £5 per visitor (£3 concession). There are those who think that charging at our museums and galleries is inevitable. I'm not one of them. I believe it must not happen if our museums are to flourish. The plain truth is that the average fall in visitor numbers after charging is introduced is about 40 per cent. Some charging museums claim they have regained their audiences after three to five years. But compare visitor numbers at the charging Science or National History Museums and at the free British Museum, National Gallery and the Tate: attendances at the free ones are more than double those at the charging ones. Just as important as the decline in numbers is the change in the audience. The less well-off, those who live further away and those who want to pop in regularly to see just a few things, depart: and in come the tourists, better-off locals and specialists who, through

professional connections, find ways of not paying at all. I well remember the arguments for charging. Sir Nigel Cossons was the most persistent and articulate. He introduced charging at the National Maritime Museum before going on to do the same at the Science Museum. He argued that museums had become "non-placers" to because they were subsidised by the state and charging would make them focus more on their visitors. People pay for what they want. There have been improvements in these museums since charging was introduced — popular displays and hands-on activities for children. But the Science Museum had, long ago, a world-famous interactive children's gallery which inspired the American versions on which the Science Museum's latest *Launched* is based. What has really changed are the numbers of chauffeur-driven cars lined up in South Kensington waiting to collect the kids after the museum's activities have finished. In cost to the public purse, there is very little difference between a charging and a free museum. It costs a lot to look after our historic treasures and to make them safely accessible to the public so that they live again in people's imaginations. No museum I know of in the



world breaks even, let alone makes a profit. All are subsidised by the state. The taxpayer subsidised each visit to the V&A by £14 before they introduced a voluntary charge. Afterwards, each visit cost us £24, because the attendances fell by so much. National Museums are for everyone's benefit, but they're beginning to act as if our collections, which they look after, actually belong just to them. If they charge, they inevitably become part of the tourist industry. I'm not against tourists, but the past becomes a sham if it is only preserved for them. This is a world-wide problem: how to become international while sustaining one's own culture. Museums have a key role to play here, but they'll only do it if they're free. When we opened our new St

Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art in Glasgow in 1993, we discovered we'd created a new type of public space. In this museum, followers of different faiths communicate their beliefs and concerns to each other and to a wider public. That is why, when faced with the terrible cuts we have had to make, on year (10 per cent off a £13m budget — in one go), we have chosen to close Glasgow's museums one day a week rather than charge. Charging would be suicide. We'd lose many of our local visitors, particularly the less advantaged. We'd lose the support of the politicians who represent them. Even our friends in the tourist board are against charging. They think our free museums are excellent for marketing. Scotland needs "all day family leisure activities" (everywhere to go when it's wet). The director of the Louvre once told me that the sad thing was that he couldn't get the people of Paris to come to the Louvre. The people of London do go to the National Gallery and the British Museum and to the Tate. The introduction of charges at the V&A that Sir Roy Strong set in train a decade ago is a diminution of this great tradition. It's time we cleared the field of the charging knights. Julian Spalding is the director of the Gallery of Modern Art in Glasgow.

ROBERT LEPAGE

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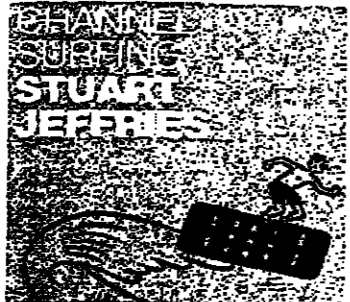
Cold comfort

Lots to beef about

The w London R

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مكتبة من الأصيل



Cold comfort

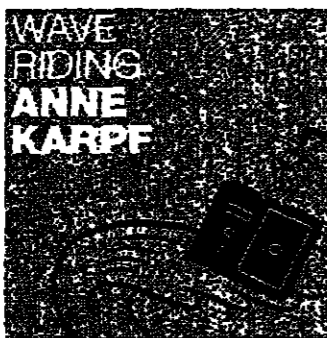
THE most interesting thing about Caroline In The City (Channel 4) was the fridge. Things were probably all sorts of things inside. No, we mean flags, Captain Oakes's preserved corpse, Caroline could conduct an Antarctic expedition without having to leave her home.

ment of space, though, are fundamental. There was once a whole episode of Ellen about buying a new sofa, and for half an hour we agonised with the flatmate: after all, this is the piece of furniture that chiefly dictates the nature of the show.

These details of interior design were central to Caroline In The City because the establishing script was hacked. Kooky thirtysomething cartoonist has an on-off thing with her floppy-haired, barrel-chested boss, but she also may have a burgeoning thing with an under-characterised, buttoned-up colourist.

On Thursday Bart and Lisa went to a theme park run by a brewery. An aquarium in the shape of a giant tankard, filled with drunk fishes swimming in beer. A water ride where the water was really a Homer would have been in his element, but was sick after eating the largest sandwich in the world, so stayed at home to watch soft porn videos with his wife.

Secretary that those people spouting what Hurd had called rubbish about the EC belonged to his own party. Clarke has a strong, jolly voice, and uses it to clarify and doggedly elucidate. Eight days ago he conducted a superb interview with Stephen Byers, the shadow junior employment spokesman alleged to have crept over the seafood. Slowly, logically (but fairly) he led Byers to the point where he could have — but of course didn't — declare the Labour Party's commitment to the trades union.



Lots to beef about

THE GREAT taboo of our times isn't connected with sex or death — it's the taboo against admitting how excruciatingly life-threateningly boring the news can be. On Wednesday evening I was trying to listen to a report on The World Tonight (Radio 4) about BSE and cattle-culling, but it was so mind-numbing that I felt a great tomb of unbeing descend, and knew that I must quickly peruse something else — a page of ads for second-hand cars, say — to release me.

After this, I dipped in again to my Life As A Car, Mack Wallington's late-night Radio 4 comedy series whose first programme had so charmed me, only to find that our hero has reached middle-age and his author's imagination has developed a paunch; reader, it sagged. On the other hand, the readings of the nation's favourite poems in Book At Bedtime (Radio 4) which I'd fully prepared to sneer at, had me enraptured. Here is the canon, but freed from the kind of declaiming which, by drawing attention to the actor's voice rather than the poet's, so often effaces instead of enhances a poem's meaning.

What we want now, according to those who know, is C96. This is the NME's catchy term for a cluster of new, mostly young, bands linked by the determination to do it themselves. New indie record labels are springing up at a rate unseen since punk, and Scots band Bis have already been on Top Of The Pops. By the standards of madly fluctuating British pop, that constitutes a full-blown movement.

Michael Billington is mesmerised by Harold Pinter's new play, Ashes To Ashes

Poet of darkness

The triumph

A NEW Pinter play is always an event doubly so in the case of Ashes To Ashes, which takes place in the re-located Royal Court Theatre Upstairs. A beguiling wraparound 140-seat space has been created from the circle of the old Ambassadors. In a similar way, Pinter in this profoundly haunting and disturbing play, builds something new on the foundations of the old.

At first it seems as if we are in familiar Pinter territory: The setting is a smooth, beige-carpeted room in a country house. A man, Devlin, relentlessly quizzes a woman, Rebecca, about a former lover. She describes how the lover would force her to kiss his fist and how her body would bend from his pressure on her throat: what is shocking is her submission to this form of sexual brutality. Devlin is impatient for more details, but the more possessive he becomes — even finally echoing the lover's physical gesture — the more Rebecca studies his grasp and retreats into another world.

Other writers have made the same connection: not least the South African poet Breyten Breytenbach in Letter From Abroad To A Butcher, which asks how the hands that sanction torture can fondle a wife's mysteries, and Sarah Kane in her play Blasted. But where Kane violently juxtaposed the domestic and the political, Pinter, with infinite subtlety, interweaves them. Rebecca talks almost with adoration of her ex-lover. Only gradually does she reveal that he was an overseer of oppressive factories deprived even of toilets (an image drawn from Pinter's reading of Gitta Sereny's book on Albert Speer) and that he tore babies from their mothers' arms. The opening image of the clenched fist slowly expands into a metaphor for Nazism.



Next Big Thing? Dan, from Tiger

The slog

BRITPOP? Yesterday's news. What we want now, according to those who know, is C96. This is the NME's catchy term for a cluster of new, mostly young, bands linked by the determination to do it themselves. New indie record labels are springing up at a rate unseen since punk, and Scots band Bis have already been on Top Of The Pops. By the standards of madly fluctuating British pop, that constitutes a full-blown movement.



Outstanding performances in an outstanding play... Stephen Rea and Lindsay Duncan

woman whose baby was snatched from her arms in an icy street she takes on her identity. Devlin, meanwhile, for all his invocations of God and moral duty, slowly adopts the persona of the fascist lover.

Pinter's is not these that come beribboned with messages; they operate more like poems, through verbal echoes and repetitions. What he is doing in this spellbinding play is offering a distilled image of experience. How is it, he asks, that men can sanction terrible cruelties and yet be adoring lovers? Is their public monstrosity echoed in their private behaviour? And is there some quality in women, intimately connected with motherhood, that allows them a greater imaginative empathy with suffering? It is fascinating how the word "baby" echoes through the text as if children were the ultimate moral test.

But, in the end, Ashes To Ashes is a multi-dimensional work that will yield different meanings to each spectator: what it says to me is that Pinter is a radical poet haunted by the mystery of how recognisable human beings, capable of the heart's affections, can at the same time license unspeakable evil. It is the same question that lies at the heart of King Lear; and while Pinter no more has the definitive answer than Shakespeare did, he poses it with mesmerising precision.

After Britpop, C96. Caroline Sullivan runs a marathon of new music in north London

Take me home



Next Big Thing? Dan, from Tiger

The slog

BRITPOP? Yesterday's news. What we want now, according to those who know, is C96. This is the NME's catchy term for a cluster of new, mostly young, bands linked by the determination to do it themselves. New indie record labels are springing up at a rate unseen since punk, and Scots band Bis have already been on Top Of The Pops. By the standards of madly fluctuating British pop, that constitutes a full-blown movement.

Over at the Dublin Castle, in a minuscule room used by Blur to play the odd secret gig, Comet Gain were a very English mix of threadbare pullovers and sultry chisling. The guitarist illustrated the incestuousness of this C96 business by remarking: "To everyone who was at the party the other night, I'm sorry for whatever I did." At least half the joint sniggered.

At the Underworld they confiscated bottles of water at the door, but the Electric Ballroom, where Glasgow's Delgados were giving short shrift to received notions of melody made up of it with free "herbal gin". That kept you going through Collapsed Lung, a kind of had Brit Beatle Boys, but as the evening wore on, the novelty wore off. Fifteen groups to go, and it was raining. Reconnoitering at the tube station, the best idea seemed to be to follow the noisiest people. They led to Dingwalls, the only place where people were actually pushing to get in. The ruckus was over Tiger, a Bedford act with Michael Bolton hair and interesting ideas about poppy guitars and droning

keyboards. In all sexes and sizes, they were the only Crawlers who didn't sound like someone else.

There only remained to investigate the other big-queue band, Urusei Yatsura, whose trademark is a good scream at the start and end of every thrashy number.

They were lining up all the way down the road for this. One thing was correct — by the end of the Crawl, you certainly were crawling. Crawling home, that is, popped out, but with a feeling that Tiger could soon be somebodies.

Book of the Week: Understanding Virginia Woolf. Hermione Lee's brilliant and imaginative biography of Virginia Woolf is an intimate portrait of a brave, powerfully intelligent woman struggling with a terrifying periodic madness and troubled personal life.

The whole truth, nothing but the truth... in the London Review of Books



Trench explained that I had a "choice": the cane, with trousers on; or the strap, with trousers off. There was no choice, really, though Trench enormously enjoyed watching me make it. Paul Foot

WHILE THE rest of the media was debating whether a 'little caning' by ex-Eton headmaster Anthony Chenevix-Trench had ever hurt anyone, Paul Foot was revealing the real depth of his abuse in the London Review of Books. In response to a new biography whose author commended Chenevix-Trench's 'common touch', Foot reported from direct experience that this touch encompassed

the 'sensuous fingering of his pupils' buttocks before and during the interminable beatings'.

The London Review of Books aims to deflate the pompous, while seeking the real issues in the headlines. Recent articles include Martha Gellhorn on the deaths of Brazilian children, Jeremy Harding on David Steel's links to Africa's mercenary armies, and the revelation that British lawmakers have unwittingly spawned an illegal network of agencies which facilitate the entry of asylum seekers.

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Motor Racing

Schumacher catches fire at Ferrari and clears the road ahead that leads to the promised land

Alan Henry hears from the Messiah of Maranello about the rise in the team's fortunes and why he has no fear of Damon Hill

MICHAEL Schumacher sat in the Ferrari motor home at Estoril this week and beamed with delight as he recounted an early verdict on his driving ability. "I remember when somebody gave me the opportunity to test a Formula Ford car," he laughs, "and he said, 'The guy is very quick in karting but he will never be quick in a Formula car because the driving style is so different.' I think he was a little bit wrong there."

Quite an achievement for a lad from modest surroundings who, little more than 10 years ago, was scrambling round a kart circuit in the German town of Kerpen where his mother ran the hamburger stand. For Ferrari, Schumacher's arrival is akin to that of a great prize. The team has spent years of struggling, the famous Maranello team believe that this is the man who can

take them to the promised land. Three wins in his first season, and a timely pole position in yesterday's free practice suggest their judgment may be correct. Schumacher agrees that he has brought a calming presence to the volatile Ferrari environment. "I think I have been able to give consistency," he says. "In all teams a driver has a certain responsibility to cheer the team a little bit. Even if it is not too much, or too obvious, you can make the team nervous or keep it calm. I think in that respect I did the job, in that I didn't become nervous at the time when it was clear that the other drivers would have become nervous and then, rather than improve, get even worse."

"The Ferrari organisation has improved a lot. You see the situation now with Benetton where, in getting new drivers, it takes a certain time until everything adapts. I think those times are over for us at Ferrari, but there are still certain things that need to be done before we are at the level of top teams like Williams and Benetton." So does Schumacher believe that Ferrari can return to a championship-winning position? "Yes," he says firmly. "I am very optimistic that we are able to do this and that's what I'm pushing very hard for. That's why I am considering 1998, because I see what we have been able to do up to now. I think I can foresee what happens in 1997, but the real potential, I think, comes in 1998."

Schumacher is modest when it comes to discussing his three Ferrari victories. He is proud of his wet-weather domination of the Spanish Grand Prix, and clearly relishes his win on the team's home soil at Monza. But his win in the Belgian Grand Prix at Spa, where his Ferrari developed play in his steering, was extra special. "Tackling the 180mph swerves through the Belgian pit forests when you are not certain whether the front wheels will respond correctly is, he concedes, not something you want to do on a regular basis. "It came suddenly, while I was riding very hard over the kerbs, I took a couple of laps easier until I got confirmation from the team that the parts would be strong enough. But if you start to lose your trust in the team, then I think you have lost anyway."

"I have had bad experiences when I lost my steering with Benetton in Brazil last year. But I never lost my confidence in the team. Probably that is because I am still young. Maybe in 10 years' time I would have come into the pits under similar circumstances." Damon Hill may be on course to win the title this year but Schumacher believes Benetton is only borrowing the title from him. "Obviously there have been a lot of stories that Damon has been a different person from the beginning of the season, and so on. For me that is not the case; Damon is Damon. I know you can improve yourself slightly, to become more intelligent in certain areas, know how to handle certain things? I don't see it. "Nobody has done this, in my view, ever. Not I, not any body else, not Damon, and this has become obvious I believe through the season."

"Nevertheless I think he has done a good job. There is definitely a certain pressure from having the best car; everyone expects you to win. So therefore it should be quite interesting for him to go elsewhere next year in order to prove what is his real position. "It was the same with me; being in Benetton for four and a half years, a lot of people spoke about my talent, but obviously they were more confident about myself after I drove for a different team (Ferrari). "The message may be couched in scrupulously polite terms but the sub-text is obvious. Schumacher does not regard Hill as a threat. Mischievously, perhaps, he predicts that Heinz-Harald Frentzen, who will take Hill's place at Williams, will be the man to beat next season. "Should Ferrari provide Schumacher with another midgeting car next season."



Schumacher... larger than life in Portugal yesterday. Frentzen could really worry him. At present Schumacher is the best driver in the world. Britain's Olympic team captain, is over. The 33-year-old defender, who won Olympic bronze four years ago and European gold in 1991, has told the England coach Maggie Sonyave that she will not be contending for a place at next year's World Cup qualifier in Zimbabwe. "Atkins was tempted to play at the Commonwealth Games, in which hockey makes its debut in 1998, but recognised that she is not getting any younger and did not relish having to resume training at 33. She intends to resume playing for her club, Bradford, only after the winter break so is one of several Olympic players who will miss the start of the Women's National League tomorrow. Leicester's Kath Johnson is also resting. Jane Sixsmith of Sutton is on holiday, and Hightown's Chris Cook has decided to take a year off. Hightown, who won European gold and bronze and the National League last season, see this term as one for development. They have signed two talented teenagers - Helen Grant, 17, and Anneliese Bishop, 16 - and both may play at Clifton.

Tennis

Euro-Africa Zone, Group Two play-off: Great Britain v Egypt

Rusedski serves notice of intent

Stephen Berley at Wimbledon

DURING Antonioni's film Blow Up, a couple play a surreal game of tennis in a London park without a ball. A similar illusory feeling existed at Wimbledon yesterday. Britain's two Davis Cup singles victories over Egypt were real enough but there was a peculiar lack of atmosphere despite an excellent crowd of more than 5,000 on the soon to be demolished No. 1 Court. Tim Henman put his finger on it. "Normally during Wimbledon, even when things are quiet, you can hear the noise from other matches. Here there was nothing else going on. It was very strange."

An unfortunate off-court incident after the first set, a sudden, stentorian cry from the north stand that "Could we have a doctor quickly?" An elderly spectator had suffered a heart attack and the two players had to break off for 45 minutes. When they returned, Rusedski rattled off four games to take the first set 6-2. Britain were always clear favourites to win this Euro-African Zone Group Two promotion match, especially on grass, but Rusedski's dominant form calmed any hint of nerves. There was a dampness in the grass which saw all four layers tumble at various times and there was genuine apprehension right at the start of Henman's match when he slipped awkwardly. David Lloyd, Britain's team captain, was immediately concerned that Henman might have aggravated the groin injury that he suffered before the US Open. Fortunately no damage was done. Rusedski, after taking the first set, had little further trouble against El Sawy. A single break in both the second and third sets gave the Egyptian a routine victory, 6-2, 6-4, 7-5. He was able to serve well within himself, though still chalking up 16 aces, and attack the Egyptian's unremarkable serve to obviously telling effect. This was the first time this year that Henman and Rusedski have been in the team together. "We have confidence in each other's game and know that, if one of us has an off day, the other can pull things around," said Henman.

Today Neil Broad and Mark Petchey should wrap up the tie with a doubles win. This will take Britain into Group One, where the opposition will be altogether tougher but the prize is an ultimate place among the world's top 16 teams in 1998. Henman's opponent was the 52nd-ranked Amir Ghoneim. After the US Open he took a complete rest and began practicing again only last Monday. Initially there was not the least sign of rustiness as he won the first set 6-0. Unlike the Wimbledon fortnight advertising headlines are allowed during Davis Cup play. Coca-Cola has much in evidence. Bovril would have been more suitable. Henman's hopes of quickly getting into the warmth were halted as Ghoneim began to get up to speed. He hit the occasional stunner, but the occasional grass return, and generally proved himself a considerable cut above his lowly ranking. An exquisite lob secured Henman's break in the second set but when he lost his serve to go 5-3 down in the third, the prospect of a fourth set loomed large. Fortunately he battled back, eventually winning 6-0, 6-4, 7-5 to give Britain a seemingly conclusive lead.



Davis determination... Tim Henman serves out for a singles win that gave Britain a 2-0 lead. PHOTOGRAPH BY IAN HOGSON

Hockey

Atkins quits at top

Pat Rowley

THE 11-year international career of Jill Atkins, Britain's Olympic team captain, is over. The 33-year-old defender, who won Olympic bronze four years ago and European gold in 1991, has told the England coach Maggie Sonyave that she will not be contending for a place at next year's World Cup qualifier in Zimbabwe. "Atkins was tempted to play at the Commonwealth Games, in which hockey makes its debut in 1998, but recognised that she is not getting any younger and did not relish having to resume training at 33. She intends to resume playing for her club, Bradford, only after the winter break so is one of several Olympic players who will miss the start of the Women's National League tomorrow. Leicester's Kath Johnson is also resting. Jane Sixsmith of Sutton is on holiday, and Hightown's Chris Cook has decided to take a year off. Hightown, who won European gold and bronze and the National League last season, see this term as one for development. They have signed two talented teenagers - Helen Grant, 17, and Anneliese Bishop, 16 - and both may play at Clifton.

Weekend fixtures

Table listing various football leagues and fixtures for the weekend, including Nationwide League, Bell's Scottish League, and others.

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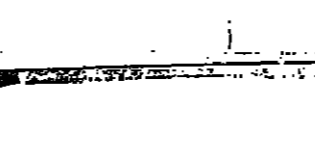
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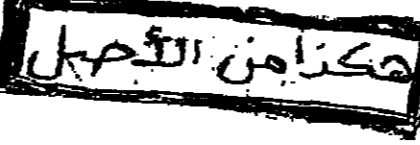
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Racing

Carson sustains liver injury from filly's kick

WILLIE CARSON is stable but not critical following a liver injury after being kicked by a horse in a frightening accident at Newbury yesterday.

He was last in the wars back in July when crashing off Mubhill after the horse broke its leg at Newmarket. He needed hospital treatment and it was two and a half weeks before he felt fit enough to return to action.

Newbury card with form guide for televised races

Table with 3 columns: Race number, Name, and Details (jockey, trainer, odds).

Ayr with TV form

Table with 3 columns: Race number, Name, and Details (jockey, trainer, odds).

Chris Hawkins WILLIE CARSON is stable but not critical following a liver injury after being kicked by a horse in a frightening accident at Newbury yesterday.

That looks rock-solid form and although he has plenty of weight I hope to see him finishing strongly and gain a deserved big-handicap success.

Carson was taken to the North Hampshire Hospital in Basingstoke following the incident that preceded the Polygam Monster Collection Film's Stakes.

Coastal Reef, the long time favourite, is also well drawn at number 28 and even with top weight of 9st 10lb must be on the short-list. He ran away with the Stewards' Cup at Goodwood despite David Barron, his trainer, expressing doubts about the firm ground.

Mervyn Rees, consultant liver surgeon at the hospital, said: "Examination revealed that he had sustained an isolated injury to his liver. He is in a stable, but not critical condition."

Today's big race is the Led-Back Handicap. Coastal Reef is the favourite at 2/1. Other contenders include Coastal Reef, Coastal Reef, Coastal Reef.

Hockey Atkins quits at top

STIRRING EUROPEAN RECOVERY AT ST PIERRE

Davies runaway win leads Solheim pairs fightback

David Davies at Chepstow sees the US reined in after an ominously dominant start

A T LUNCHTIME here yesterday there was a lot of brave, if clichéd, talk about there being a lot of golf still to be played, about it not being over yet, about golf being a funny game. At that stage the United States led Europe in the Solheim Cup by 34-12, and a rout was in prospect. After the afternoon session, though, that had been averted. Europe won the four-ball series 24-12, and although overall they are two points behind at 3-5, all the aforementioned clichés have real meaning to them again. As the Ryder Cup men proved in the US last year, two points can be more than made up in 12 matches, let alone the 20 still to come here. St Pierre is a two-tier course, with holes 3 to 6 only achieved by rapping-up and slipping on the crumpons. Once up there, though, there is a natural amphitheatre offering a view of the 5th and 6th greens, and early in the afternoon this heavily populated Kop was uncannily quiet. Forlams it had been stunted into silence by the events of the morning, but even when the first match through the 6th was won for Europe by a Irish Johnson birdie there was not much reaction.

- FOURSBOMES
A Sorenstam/C Nilsmark halved with K Robbins/M McGarrn
L Davies/A Nicholas lost to P Sheehan/R Jones 1 down
M L De Lorenz/D Reid lost to B Demie/V Skinner 1 down
H Alfredsson/N Neumann lost to D Pepper/B Burton 2&1
Europe 12, United States 35
FOURBALLS
L Davies/T Johnson beat K Robbins/P Bradley 6 and 5
A Sorenstam/K Marshall beat V Skinner/J Geddes 1 up
L Neumann/C Nilsmark lost to D Pepper/B King 1 down
H Alfredsson/A Nicholas halved with M Mallon/B Daniel
Europe 24, United States 12
MATCH POSITION: Europe 3, United States 5

First-day results

hours, the final fourball reached the last green. A win for Europe looked likely after two green shots from Alison Nicholas, but Beth Daniel, in the trees and out with her second shot, holed from 15 feet for a very unlikely and rather unfair half. The initial stages of the morning foursomes had looked distinctly promising as Sorenstam and Nilsmark quickly went three up on Robbins and Michelle McGarrn. They had teed off in a grey gloom of a morning, albeit in front of a stand three-quarters full of people at 7.45am. Robbins had the first shot and, looking taut, hit a quick hook 40 yards left of the centre of the fairway. She glanced at the heavens, as if to say "I knew I'd do that", and she went on to miss the green with her third shot and then miss from six feet, so that the Americans were immediately one down. They continued to play poorly, taking 40 - five over par - to the turn and were deservedly three down. At this stage Europe were leading in three matches, down only in one, but there was some unravelling to come. Not only did Robbins and McGarrn, as they produced four birdies on the back nine, including one at the last Nilsmark had holed from seven feet for their birdie, leaving Robbins with one from four feet for the halved match. As she stood to it, there was a noise in the crowd, she stood away and then, bravely, knocked it in. The Swedes had played the back nine in 37, but worse was to come. Davies and Nicholas, down all the way from the 6th, came back in 28 to lose for the first time in foursomes, then Marie-Laure de Lorenz and Dale Reid, level at the turn, contrived to take 41 for the homeward half and still only lose by one hole. Daniel and Val Skinner, having lost 3 and 1 and having bogged five of the next seven holes, The Americans were one over par for their last eight holes and went from two down to two up, an ignominious collapse by the Swedes.



Exemplary short game... Laura Davies chips to the green during her 6 and 5 win with Trish Johnson

Sherry hits out at 'joke' course

ON A day when the wind howled and the flags seemed to go into hiding, several players voiced their deep disapproval at the set-up of the course here. Most notable of the critics was the resident professional Gordon Sherry, who shot a four-over-par 76 in yesterday's second round, "the pin placements were a joke", he said. "Loch Lomond is a stern enough test without making it stupid. "It's an American-style course, surely it's meant for target golf; you don't need to turn up the greens. The rough has been grown too, and you've not shot if you're off the fairway. They didn't need to change it; this is not the real Loch Lomond. He was joined in his condemnation by one of his playing partners, Peter O'Malley of Australia (78), and by New Zealand's Frank Nobilo (79). O'Malley went so far as to suggest that "somebody on the Four should be sacked". Sherry's outburst was endorsed by the high scoring cut was made at 151, nine over, and only seven of the 120-strong field broke par for the day. Still, the conditions seemed not to matter to Jean Van de Velde, the Frenchman, who shot a course-record 65, or Thomas Bjorn, the little-known Dane who took the halfway lead with a 69 for a three-under 139. Van de Velde attributed his performance to a putting tip he got from his wife, although he remained secretive enough not to divulge details. "She is a 15-handicapper and plays about three times a year," he said. "But she is a genius of a putter, never misses." Van de Velde not only had seven birdies, with one bogey, but needed only 11 putts on the back nine, which he covered in 31, four under par. The Australian Robert Allenby also called the pin placements "stupid" after carding a 77 to join Van de Velde on two under par. "I would have handed myself into contention with a 69 to be three off the pace, level with Colin Montgomerie who picked up three shots in the last five holes to finish level. Nick Faldo is two strokes off the lead after an uneventful 73.

Soccer

Rioch No.2 to Houston

Martin Thorpe on a piece of role-reversal that spells a new snub for Manchester City. Strangers rings have happened. Rioch's acceptance of Houston's offer to reverse roles was a big surprise. Rioch is settling a £250,000 pay-off with Arsenal, maybe Rioch feels he can now afford to take a less stressful back seat and consider management offers as they arise. Having been snubbed by three managers, what did Manchester City do yesterday to appease their fans? They signed Eddie McDermid, the Arsenal winger who last merited a place in the Highbury first team a year ago - coincidentally coming on as a substitute against City. He arrives on a month's loan.

The Arsenal defender Nigel Winterburn has been charged with bringing the game into disrepute by the Football Association after incidents in Monday's 4-1 win over Sheffield Wednesday. The left-back is alleged to have gestured at Wednesday fans after Arsenal's second and third goals. The FA spokesman Steve Double said: "The player has been charged on the basis of reports filed by the referee Mike Reed and the fourth official Paul Alcock." Wednesday's manager David Pleat was expected to complain about the referee's performance in the game, including missing an incident in which Ian Wright pulling Regi Blinker's dreadlocks. However, the FA said yesterday that it had so far received no formal complaint.



Rioch... assistant

The Hand of God fails to open doors at the Bridge

Soccer Diary Martin Thorpe. THE only thing a star being recognised is not being recognised. Or so they say. Just being snubbed is bad enough. Last Sunday the survival world of Diego Maradona collided with the real world of Stamford Bridge, and here is the full, weird story.

OF COURSE, Dave Bassett is not the first man who lived to regret a promise made the night before. But who does Francis Lee turn to next? How about Gary Peters, the Preston manager. Then there's the case of Alan Shearer who has been taken to hospital. Fittingly, Brabbi was described in the Blackpool v Chelsea programme in midweek as "a midfielder who likes to get involved". WE MUST all offer Tony Adams our support in his time of trouble. writes Chris Simpson of Lancaster. So no cracks about him being on the wagon instead of pulling it. THE Spanish side Celta Vigo will kick off their game against Real Betis an hour early tomorrow. Not to keep fans out of bars or avoid a clash with another game, but to allow their Israeli international midfielder Haim Revivo time to start Yom Kippur, the Jewish Day of Atonement.

TEAM SHEET

- Aston Villa v Manchester United
Aston Villa who scored a midweek hat-trick for the reserves, is close to his first start of the season for Liverpool. Roy Keane who has recovered from atmospheric injuries, will be named as the third substitute. Nikola Djuric could be back in the squad. West Ham have the Dumbarton available again after international duty with Romania, but he is likely to be one of the substitutes because he is in Italy for Steve Marlowe, continuing in goal in place of the injured Laurie Dickson, will make his Premiership debut.
Sheffield Wed v Derby
Wednesday may have a big hole in their central defence as Jon Newson, Daniel Steigelmans and Lee Walker all have injury lists. Derby, who have not won at Whitehouse since 1923 may be without Aljosha Kovacevic, who picked up a high injury in training this week, but have Harry Kewell (ankle), Ron Williams (groin) and Marco Gabbiadini still available again.
Sunderland v Coventry
Sunderland's injury news is good. Neil Clenden has recovered from his ankle injury. They could give Alan Rice his first start of the season or recall Kevin Bell, but there is no place for Danny Rodriguez. Coventry continues as right-back for Coventry as Rogério Gonçalves is not yet over his groin injury.
Tottenham v Leicester
Though Andy Simon is back, Spurs have forward problems. Teddy Sheringham is still sidelined with a knee injury. Chris Armstrong faces a fitness test after picking up an injury at Preston in midweek, and Darren Anderton plays on though he needs hernia surgery. Leicester are likely to return Emilio Hossain, Neil Lennon and Simon Grayson to the starting line-up after Tuesday night's 2-0 win at Scarborough. Robbie is expected to make way. The holdover is Mike Walker and Colin Hill are suffering from a virus. So the Premiership fixture looks set to be a bit of a struggle for Tottenham as they stand by.

A N Other

FOR the best part of an 18-year career spent in front of the game's most famous human hill, this skilful, quick-witted attacker was never booked, and when the record ended it was more a result of bad judgment by the referee than any misconduct on the player's part. He was one of the first wingers to be withdrawn behind the front runners, a role he filled with distinction before finishing, briefly, among some wobbled feet in Watford's last week. Trevor Brooking (West Ham United).

Scottish preview

Rangers determined to stay focused at Kilmarnock. DISTRUCTIONS can be a dangerous thing in football and Walter Smith, the Rangers manager, will be only too anxious to concentrate on the business in hand at Kilmarnock today. The Dux side face a week for the meeting with the League showdown with Auxerre on Wednesday and the first confrontation of the season with Celtic next Saturday. Such a prospect can deflect attention from the first hurdle and make a daunting blunder a real possibility. Smith is determined that his players should preserve their two-point lead over Celtic in the Premier Division before meeting their most serious rivals. "It's important that we don't take our eye off the ball at Kilmarnock or look at Europe and Celtic," he said. "It's easily done, but they have to maintain concentration and keep up the good run of results at home." Rangers have won all eight of their domestic games in the



Performance of the week: Ian Wright (Arsenal), whose hat-trick against Sheffield Wednesday on Monday brought his total of goals for the club to 150.

Soccer Diary

OF COURSE, Dave Bassett is not the first man who lived to regret a promise made the night before. But who does Francis Lee turn to next? How about Gary Peters, the Preston manager. Then there's the case of Alan Shearer who has been taken to hospital. Fittingly, Brabbi was described in the Blackpool v Chelsea programme in midweek as "a midfielder who likes to get involved". WE MUST all offer Tony Adams our support in his time of trouble. writes Chris Simpson of Lancaster. So no cracks about him being on the wagon instead of pulling it. THE Spanish side Celta Vigo will kick off their game against Real Betis an hour early tomorrow. Not

Argentina's Caniggia free for the taking

CLAUDIO CANIGGIA, the Argentine international striker, wants to play in England and has been offered to four Premiership clubs, writes Martin Thorpe. The former Roma and Benfica player is out of contract so is available without a fee, though he will demand wages comparable with other foreign Premiership stars. The four clubs comprise two from London and two from the north but do not include Arsenal, with whom the 29-year-old was previously linked. Caniggia was once banned for 13 months after testing positive for cocaine, but his representative in England, the sports lawyer Mel Goldberg, said yesterday: "He did have some personal problems but all that is behind him. He is a big crowd pleaser and would be a tremendous asset to a club. Charlton have signed the Colchester midfielder Mark Nicholson for an undisclosed six-figure fee. Southampton are planning a £10 million share issue to raise funds for new players.

July 1996

Cricket

Championship: Leicestershire v Middlesex

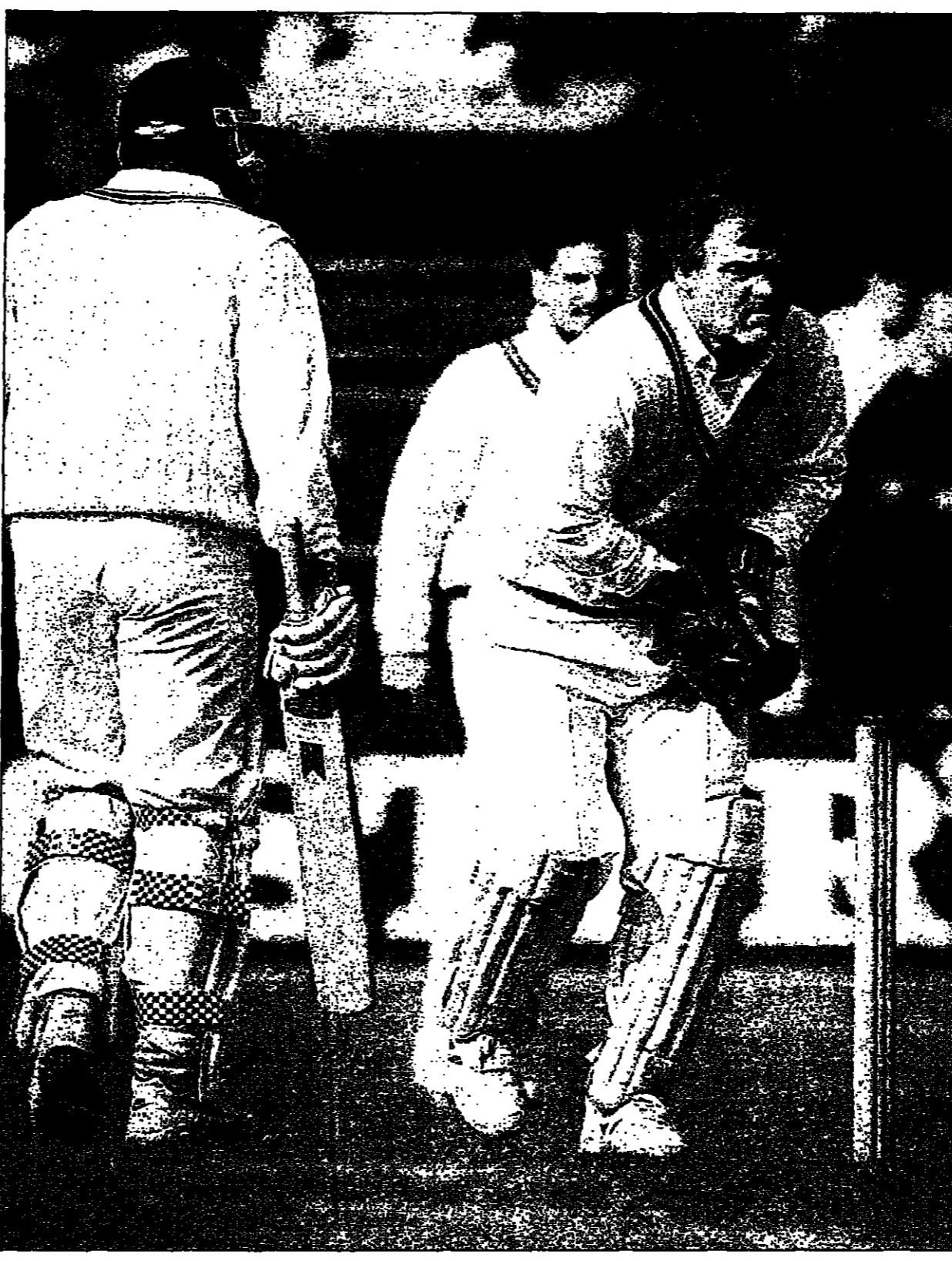
Simmons claims a title bonus

Mike Selvey at Grace Road

LEICESTERSHIRE continued their drive towards the County Championship yesterday. Phil Simmons took them to 350, thumping a square cut to the boundary bang on 5pm to claim maximum bonus points. A draw, with the three points it brings, would be enough now to give them the title should the game last until tomorrow evening.

Indeed Leicestershire have probably done enough already to ensure that things will be sewn up long before then. When bat light halted play at 5.30pm they had reached 381 for eight, a first-innings lead of 191. Middlesex, outplayed and looking weary, do not seem in the mood to offer a deal of resistance. But on a day of rising Leicester euphoria their coach, Jack Birkenshaw, strongly criticised the defensive leg-side tactics employed by Phil Tufnell and sanctioned by Mike Gatting, the Middlesex captain.

Birkenshaw was unequivocal. "For an England bowler to use that tactic on the second day spoils the game," he said. Lord's also had its say with Tim Lamb, who takes over as chief executive on November 1, insisting that the game's international and domestic governing bodies must clamp down. "The FCCB and ICC feel the issue of bowling down the leg side has to be addressed," he said yesterday. "As the laws stand it is legitimate but it is not edifying." They will undoubtedly set up a working party to look into the matter. Lamb had already been alerted by a phone call from Grace Road, seeking clarification on one of those anomalies that tend to arise in a game of such complexity. This one involved the Middlesex wicketkeeper Keith Brown, who having missed the first session because of soreness to the finger he displaced on the first day - Gatting tested the stitching on his trousers by deputising - took up his stance to Tufnell on the leg side of the batsman. Did that, Simmons wondered, constitute a third fielder behind square on the leg side, contrary to the laws? Lamb consulted the former Test umpire Nigel Plews, whose ruling was that the keeper does not constitute a fielder as such and, provided he was in a position to be the first person to intercept the ball should the batsman miss it, everything was as it should be.



Never stumped... the Middlesex captain, Mike Gatting, had to take over wicketkeeping duty yesterday

Rugby Union

Carling thinking of England

Robert Armstrong

WILL CARLING will use Harlequins' League One match at Bristol today as a springboard from which to relaunch his England career into a remarkable 10th season of Test rugby. The former England skipper, who has helped propel Quins to the top of the Courage League with a 100 per cent record, looks certain to be included over the weekend in a revised national squad for next Wednesday's scheduled training session at Bisham Abbey. The 39-year-old has shown no slackening of pace, fitness or enthusiasm in his three League outings to date, underlining his claim to an England recall by adding accurate goalkicking to his repertoire of skills. The Quins centre has also made it clear that he will not listen to anyone who tries to tell him not to attend squad sessions or play for his country.

Irrespective of who gets the England captaincy - the forwards Jason Leonard, Lawrence Dallaglio and Ben Clarke have all been touted - Carling would serve as a positive playing influence in a squad that has been coolly manipulated for dubious political motives in recent weeks. Having won 66 caps (59 as captain) and led England to three Grand Slams, Carling continues to enjoy the kind of cult status among supporters that would act as a timely corrective to widespread public dismay at the squad's inactivity. No doubt, Carling's proven track record as a winner - he has shared in 47 England victories - also commends itself to the coaching staff who feel that the loss of quality training time puts England at a disadvantage in the busy autumn programme of internationals that has been lined up. Matches against Italy (November 23), the New Zealand Barbarians (November 30) and Argentina (December 14) are now likely to be supplemented by a hastily arranged test against Australia on November 2 or 16. It would, of course, be rarely ironic if Carling, who was sacked and reinstated as captain by the RFU during the risible Old Parts affair 17 months ago, were to emerge, albeit inadvertently, as an RFU rallying point among players whose loyalty is wavering. Epruc officers may consider themselves fortunate that Carling has been out of the England squad, otherwise they might have suffered the embarrassment of hearing a loud raspberry from the distinguished Harlequin.

Surrey v Worcestershire

Mournful autumn of discontent

David Hopps at The Oval

IT MIGHT be one of the closest championship finishes in years but, as grey clouds enveloped the capital for the second successive day, Surrey's challenge could hardly have seemed more futile. This is a game suffering from SAD.

Only 400 were possible after Thursday's abandonment during which Worcestershire progressed safely enough to 154 for three, and only the most incorrigible Surrey supporter will anticipate victory. The first-class fixture list is a triumph of optimism over logic. It begins in mid-April, with the hedges barely in leaf and hands numbed by cold, and overstates its welcome deep into September. A summer's aspirations - represented by the endless cataloguing sessions, jading motorway journeys and continual frets over form and fitness - are relinquished with brief expressions of sadness.

There will always be those who speak fondly of Indian summers, and there are few finer sensations than playing cricket on a sunlit September afternoon, but all too often the championship leads to a halt in shadowy, astigmatic light. This stubborn attempt to disregard the inevitable onset of autumn seems the very stuff of English eccentricity.

It was hunches before the square had dried out sufficiently, which did little for the reputation of a mooching ground staff. The Oval was a cavernous shell of unpatriated beer stalls and second-hand book stands. A smattering of spectators, wrapped in winter coats, sat many yards apart, enclosed in their wistful private thoughts. Chris Lewis, who cried off with influenza, was right to stay in bed.

Gloucestershire v Kent

Unhappy Kent condemned to fighting a phoney war

Paul Weaver at Bristol

KENT are provisionally second in the table this morning, two points ahead of Surrey, having taken a maximum four bowling points against Gloucestershire here yesterday. But they did not look ecstatic about it; this was a desultory, hands-in-pockets sort of day.

Their noble bid to turn the table upside-down and finish top, having been bottom last year, ended in mid-afternoon with the news that Gloucestershire had secured a second batting point. Before the weekend is through Kent may also have lost the runners-up prize-money of £15,000. "They may well lose this match, having conceded a first-innings lead of 87 runs. At the close, after a fiery burst from Courtney Walsh and Mike Smith, they were 21 for one in their second innings, still 66 behind. Darryl Foster, Kent's Australian coach, presented a watery smile and did his best to look philosophical, although in truth he must have felt like fighting Lady Luck a sharp kick on the shin.

Sport in brief

Chess

Another 2½-1½ win, this time against Romania, kept England in third place with an unbeaten record at the 127-nation Olympiad in Erevan, writes Leonard Barden. Matthew Sadler, the 22-year-old British champion and youngest in the team, scored the winning point but Nigel Short and Michael Adams again conceded draws to much lower-ranked opponents. So far Short and Adams have drawn six games out of seven.

Badminton

Park Jo-Bong, widely regarded as the greatest doubles player of all time, has agreed in principle to come to England to live and coach next year, writes Richard Jago.

Darts

The oldest and best-known tournament in the British game, the News of the World Open, is returning after a six-year absence. Maximum 180s are rare in this competition, open to every player in the country, as the throw is traditionally from 8ft and not the professionals' distance of 7ft 9½in.

Boxing

Birmingham's Robert McCracken has lost his chance of adding the WBO world middleweight championship to his Commonwealth title because his manager Micky Duff cannot agree terms with the champion, Lonnie Bradley of the United States. McCracken, unbeaten in 27 fights, now meets Fitzgerald Bruney of Canada in a Commonwealth rematch at the Villa Leisure Centre on October 1.

Tennis

The unseated Kimberly Po continued her demolition of

the rankings at the Niharel International in Tokyo yesterday when she beat the fourth seed Mary Pierce 7-5, 6-4 to earn a place in the semi-finals against Arantxa Sanchez Vicario.

Scoreboard

Table listing cricket scores for various matches including Derbyshire v Durham, Essex v Glamorgan, Northamptonshire v Yorkshire, and Surrey v Worcestershire.

Derbyshire v Durham

Cricket scorecard for Derbyshire v Durham, including batting and bowling statistics.

Essex v Glamorgan

Cricket scorecard for Essex v Glamorgan, including batting and bowling statistics.

Northamptonshire v Yorkshire

Cricket scorecard for Northamptonshire v Yorkshire, including batting and bowling statistics.

Surrey v Worcestershire

Cricket scorecard for Surrey v Worcestershire, including batting and bowling statistics.

Cricket

Table listing county cricket scores and complete county scores for various matches.

Leicestershire v Middlesex

Cricket scorecard for Leicestershire v Middlesex, including batting and bowling statistics.

Gloucestershire v Kent

Cricket scorecard for Gloucestershire v Kent, including batting and bowling statistics.

Warwickshire v Lancashire

Cricket scorecard for Warwickshire v Lancashire, including batting and bowling statistics.

Warwickshire

Cricket scorecard for Warwickshire, including batting and bowling statistics.

Advertisement for 'Walking helps cure cancer' featuring a large image of a person walking and text explaining the benefits of walking for cancer patients.

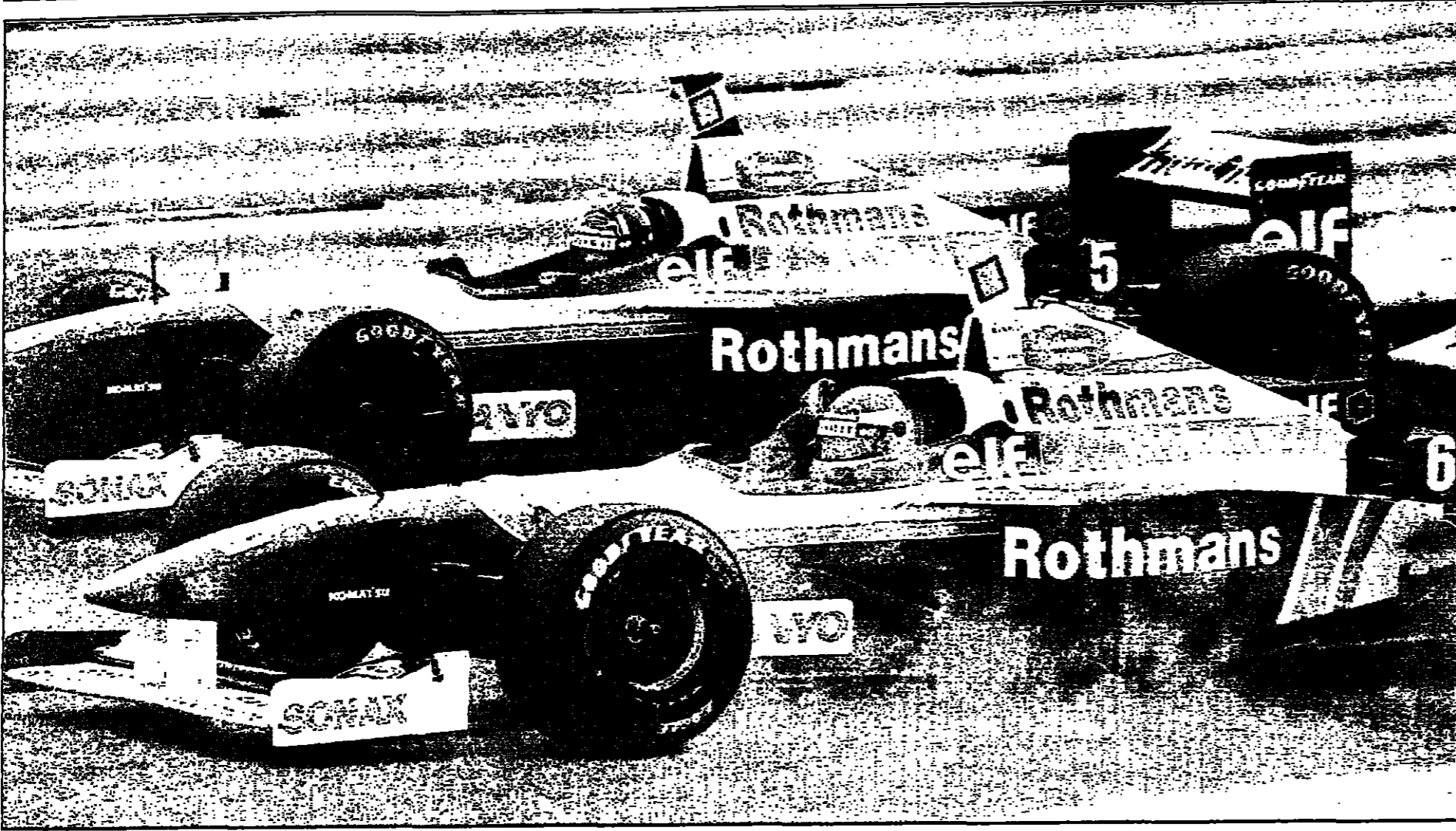


Ferrari's giant leap Bright future for Prancing Horse 20



Solheim Cup Davies leads Europe to a late recovery 22

BRITISH ACE IS JUST ONE GOOD RACE AWAY FROM FORMULA ONE TITLE



Shape of things to come... the two Williams cars joust in practice yesterday as Villeneuve (foreground) brakes hard in attempting to overtake Hill on the inside

Day for disillusion or glory

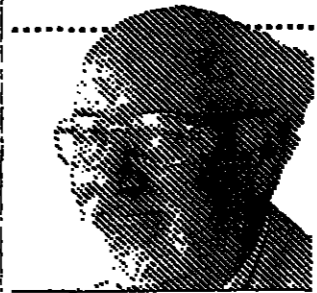
Richard Williams reports from Estoril on Damon Hill's date with destiny and a world championship in tomorrow's Portuguese GP

FOR Damon Hill life is never simple. even when it seems most straightforward. He will win the Formula One world championship if he finishes ahead of Jacques Villeneuve, his Williams team-mate, in the Portuguese Grand Prix here tomorrow. But if the French-Canadian wins the race, or finishes second with Hill in fifth or sixth place, the battle will continue into the season's final round, in Japan in three weeks' time. After seven victories in 14 races so far this year, Hill's 13-point lead makes him an odds-on favourite. But there are no guarantees. "If it were just down to performance and driving," he said before practice started yesterday, "I'd be very confident. With the car I have, and feeling the way I do at the moment, I believe I can go out on Sunday and win the race. "But there have been enough times this season when we've had proof that grand prix racing can throw up the unexpected." He is also being forced to contemplate his future at a time when he needs to focus all his efforts on this week-end's race. The crescendo of speculation can hardly be helping his concentration, al-

though he was maintaining an even temper yesterday in the face of endless questioning. All requests for the latest information on his contractual negotiations were firmly refused. "I'm not disclosing what my plans are," he said. "I've had a lot of discussions and phone calls. In time there will be some news. But I'm here to do a job of work." It is now clear that even the influence of Bernie Ecclestone, Formula One's chief power-broker, has not been enough to get Hill a seat in either the Ferrari or the Benetton team next year. Ecclestone knows that ITV, which takes over British transmission of the series from the BBC next year, wants to see a British champion defending his title in a competitive car. Ferrari and Benetton took the proposition seriously but concluded that the disruption to their settled teams, not to mention the several million dollars required to compensate Eddie Irvine or Jean Alesi for the termination of their contracts, would not be matched by the potential dividends of Hill's presence. This means that Hill's only possibility of a competitive drive now rests with the Jordan-Peugeot team, where he would partner Ralf Schu-

macher, the world champion's 21-year-old brother, who was introduced to the press yesterday. For Eddie Jordan, Hill's proven competence as a test driver would make him the ideal complement to the German novice, who is said to lack none of his elder brother's self-confidence. Hill's final realistic option, that of joining the new Stewart-Ford team, is not favoured by Ecclestone since it would not satisfy the requirement of putting him up among the front runners in the team's first season, however satisfying it might be to help Jackie Stewart get his project off the ground. So Jordan it will be, so long as Hill wins the title. Yesterday he denied that retirement had crossed his mind. But if he again fails to take the championship, disillusionment may seem the most appealing option of all. He ended yesterday's practice session with the second-fastest time, almost three quarters of a second behind Michael Schumacher, who is finishing the season with a terrific flourish after a year of hard graft and will be hoping to become the first Ferrari driver to win three grands prix in a row since Alain Prost's victories in the Mexican, French and British races six years ago. Villeneuve was half a second further back, behind UKyo Katayama's Tyrrell-Ford and Irvine in the second Ferrari, although Friday times cannot be taken as a serious reflection of performance since each team are working on race set-ups rather than trying for ultimate speed. Schumacher warned that although he might be able to repeat the performance in today's qualifying session, the car is unlikely to perform so effectively during the race. But if he takes pole position and gets a good start in the race he will be hard to displace on a winding 2.7-mile circuit which offers only limited opportunities for overtaking. Hill is at home here. "I love it here," he said. "It's one of the more dangerous circuits we go to. There are several corners which are very fast and don't have any run-off areas, but I always enjoy driv-

Hughes the biter bit from behind



David Lacey

THERE was much fuss at Stamford Bridge last Sunday about tackles from behind. It stemmed from the number of times that Chelsea's Mark Hughes appeared to be fouled by Aston Villa's Ugo Ehiogu without a free-kick being given. With Hughes things are not always what they seem. Strength in possession is among his prime assets. He is not easily knocked off the ball, let alone knocked to the ground. So when Hughes, with increasing frequency, was left by Ehiogu in a sitting position, arms raised at the injustice of it all, it was tempting to conclude that the Aston Villa centre-back was having rather a good game. The referee, Jeff Winter, seemed to agree. For the most part he ignored Hughes's appeals. Needless to say this made the home supporters very angry, as angry, in fact, as they used to be when Hughes, playing for Manchester United, was winning free-kicks against Chelsea. Winter's strange decision to penalise Gianluca Vialli for doing nothing more than screen the ball against Ehiogu with rather more success than Hughes enjoyed did not improve the crowd's mood. Nevertheless the Villa player emerged from the match with credit, having shown that there is at least one English defender able to get tight on opponents without conceding free-kicks. Frank Leboeuf, however, took a different view. In the short time that he has been playing Premiership football for Chelsea, Leboeuf, a sweeper in the best French tradition of Marius Tresor and Laurent Blanc, has reminded the English game of the half-forgotten art of fending with the brain. His

positional sense alone recalls Bobby Moore. So he needed to be listened to when he complained about tackles from behind going unpunished. "They are dangerous," he said. "They could break someone's legs. The rules are the same all over the world now; it is forbidden to tackle in that way. Well, it may be in theory but again English football is going its own sweet way in the matter of interpretation. What if the attacker is backing into a defender, as Hughes was often doing against Ehiogu on Sunday? This was where Leboeuf's argument, though correct in the general sense, fell down on specifics. Even so, the principle of tackling from behind needs to join the charge on the goalkeeper in the museum of ancient football customs. Given the speed of the modern game, it exposes the victim to serious leg, ankle and Achilles tendon injuries. Diego Maradona was hacked down from behind so often that in the end he took to wearing shinpads fore and aft. Tackling from behind has never been unique to British football, only the equanimity with which, even now, it continues to be accepted. With more foreign players being attracted to the Premiership, that acceptance must surely be living on borrowed time. Once again the European competitions are exposing the frailties of English defences. Forbid tackling from behind altogether and the only park available to any budding Steve Boulds would be Jurassic. But England might eventually produce better centre-backs.

MARK HUGHES, of course, has always been able to look after himself. Leboeuf's pleas on the Welshman's behalf were eloquent but Hughes has not always enjoyed French support. Six seasons ago Manchester United met Montpellier at Old Trafford in the quarter-finals of the Cup Winners' Cup and were held to 1-1 in a game dominated by the libero skills of Blanc. Pascal Baillis, a Montpellier defender, was sent off after apparently flooring Hughes, although television suggested that contact had been minimal. Or as Leboeuf might have said, une grande illusion.

Alasdair Fotheringham on the sensational end to Big Mig's Tour of Spain Indurain abandons in mid-race

THE much heralded return of the Tour de France hero Miguel Indurain to the Tour of Spain turned sour on yesterday's 13th stage. After a five-year absence from the Vuelta, Indurain opted for cycling's equivalent of an early shower rather than take on the most important climb of the event, the nine-mile ascent to the Covadonga lakes. The organisers had long begged his sponsor for the return of the man who dominated stage racing for the first half of the Nineties but ignored his home race for five years to concentrate on winning the Tour de France. His debut as a fully fledged Tour de France champion brought enormous expectation in Spain and equally enormous relief to the race organisers. Last year an enforced change in race dates from April to September had seen public interest wane and journalists outnumber fans on some mountain-top finishes. But now, with Indurain in the race, the public flocked back to the roadsides, a record number of reporters were accredited, and Spanish television moved coverage from the minority channel TVE 3 to the popular TVE 1: la primera's normal schmaltzy South American soap operas designed to en-

Quiz Answers

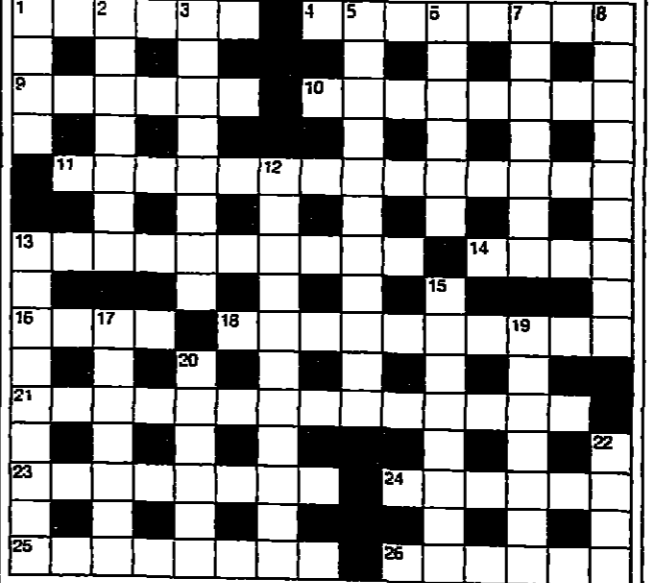
- 1. Superman, who will marry Lois Lane in Metropolis on October 9 (life-threatening events permitting). 2. Anna Ford, whose aggressive interviewing of Kenneth Clarke prompted complaints from Conservative Central Office. 3. Liz 'Lips' Hurley. 4. The Right Rev Roddy Wright, aka the Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, aka Bishop Starsky. 5. (a) Peter Kerry, the 15-year-old paperboy with wanderlust. 6. Astronaut Shannon Lucid, who caught the Shuttle after a six-month delay. 7. British Airways' new equiglobe logo cost £80 million. 8. The European Standard Personal Odour Unit (jet is short for olfactory). The EU is spending £500,000 researching how much British offices smell. 9. (a) The Majors. 10. The police - the 43 chief constables of England and Wales urged the Home Secretary to scrap the Rousing laws. 11. The Bisto Keds, derailed after 80 years because the company wants to give gravy a younger image. 12. (a) Vivian Jones, who responded by calling his accuser, Gary Lineker, a jellyfish. 13. Proficiency in PFL. The new badge was introduced this week by the Scouts in an attempt to drag the movement into the 20th century. 14. Socialism was pronounced dead by Kim Howells, while Scientology made its TV debut. 15. (a) Eric Cantona. How you rate: 0-4 Five Hall Marys 5-9 Three Our Fathers 10-14 Extra water 15: Simple divine

Guardian COLLINS Crossword 20,764

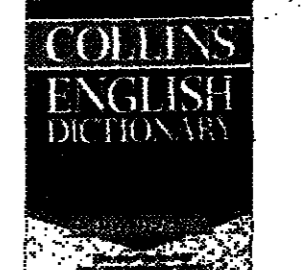
A copy of the Collins English Dictionary will be sent to the first five correct entries drawn. Entries to Guardian Crossword No 20,764, P.O. Box 315, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 2AX, by first post on Friday Solution and winners in the Guardian on Monday September 30.

Name Address

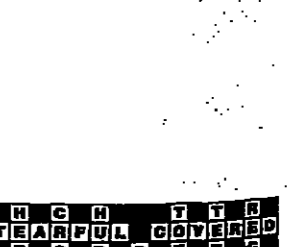
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- 1 Scott's road in a mess (6) 2 Puts about paper nearer the source (8) 3 The Goldwood Trial (6) 4 Cover for Tom in book this taxi controller should do (3-5) 13,11 ONU (10,14) 14 Five years taken over plain star (4) 15 Mule's not kept in warmer (4) 16 Indicate "Sing in the Marsh" (5-5) 17 L'assaisonnement (6,8) 21 Caesar's murder wasn't made out with turn (8)



- 12 I know what'll happen if all one runs on's up (11) 13 Bewilder knight discovered embracing spy chief (9) 15 Porcelain encourages inferno (8) 17 It's Frank, a brother for nothing! (7) 19 A home in Heaven! Pardon? (7) 20 Loose rock on North partition (6) 22 A pound a whopper! (4)



- 24 The barer part of education? (6) 25 One of the hellish Women's Lib's partners holding the ace (8) 26 Sportsman or railwayman not getting in late (6)

The Catholic Church's problem in this area is that most of its potential recruits to the priesthood are virgins, many of whom assume, with the apocalyptic lack of confidence of adolescents, that they will remain virgins for ever, so that they are not actually giving anything up. Yet, ordained and older, they suddenly discover themselves unexpectedly attractive to women. Mark Lawson's brush with the cloth

The Week cover story

Inside

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